THE LIVING AGE

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THIS WEEK

THE German food problem is that there is no German food problem. The whole trouble can be traced to the financial collapse which makes selling food a precarious enterprise. Farmers would rather fatten their live stock than their countrymen on the fruits of a bumper harvest.

* * *

We are rather inclined to accept on faith the appalling condition of the Ruhr. But it is hardly amiss to have the unpleasant details enumerated now and then as a special correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung* does this week.

* * *

The world of political intrigue furnishes us with many ridiculous spectacles, but the Separatist movement is one of the crowning buffooneries of the century. A 'Confidential Agent' shows us in true *Living Age* style the men behind the scenes. Like so many of our contributors he traveled on false passports and landed in jail.

* * *

After a brief review of other momentous trials, M. de Rabours explains the circumstances under which Conradi and Polunin were acquitted of what the headlines would call the 'Lausanne Killing.' The affair boiled down to an international judgment on Russia, the result of which surprised nobody. But what some people marveled at was that the assassins did not get any kind of sentence.

* * *

Because the Little Entente has not got such smart State Departments as we have it probably does not realize the awful perils of recognizing Russia. But the prospect of a Pan-Slavic alliance is dazzling, especially since the Latins and Anglo-Saxons are also forming cliques. The Socialist *Avanti* greets with a cheer such evidences of racial rivalry supplanting nationalism.

* * *

All the anonymous contributions at the beginning of this issue make it look like mystery week. But in the literary pages we find the names of Oscar Wilde, Henry Arthur Jones, Pierre Mille, and Katherine Mansfield, which puts us on more familiar ground.

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THE LIVING AGE

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A WEEK OF THE WORLD

FRENCH POLITICAL FORECASTS

La Revue de France has been interviewing leading political personalities in Paris with regard to the coming elections. It adopts the policy, praiseworthy as an escape from dullness but not altogether infallible as a method of political prognostication, of publishing only 'the most significant, that is the more dangerous or the more compromising,' replies.

Senator Louis Dausset of Paris believed the term *Bloc National* has been sadly abused, by attaching to it reactionary and clerical connotations. People forgot that its creators included Radical and Radical-Socialist leaders. The Senator agreed with most of the other public men interviewed that the next election would see a *Bloc de Gauches*. Speaking as a Radical-Socialist, he said his Party advocated the enforcement of the Versailles Treaty and the Poincaré foreign policy in general. It would never ally itself with the Social-Revolutionaries, and of course not with the Communists.

Léon Blum, a Socialist deputy from Paris and editor of *Le Populaire*, the organ of the moderate Socialist wing that has separated from the Communists, believed that Communism was on the wane as a political force. Even if the present Communist delegation of twelve in the Chamber were doubled at the next election, it would have no influence. He did believe, however, that the *Bloc de Gauches*, or its equivalent, would win the next election. 'The present Chamber has committed grievous errors in foreign policy, especially during the last year. The occupation of the Ruhr is illogical, and this is more evident to-day than last December.'

On the other hand André Tardieu, Clemenceau's chief lieutenant, believed that the present Cabinet had failed in not dealing sternly enough with Germany. Among other things, he observed: 'M. Poincaré does not want to make enemies among the Left, who will form the majority of the next Chamber, and whom he may need to help him into the Presidential chair again. In all of M. Poincaré's actions there is invariably an *arrière-pensée* of political chances in that direction.' M. Tardieu expected the *Bloc de Gauches* to triumph in the next elections. 'The bloc of Caillaux's friends will organize in the East and the South, principally south of a line that will go from Nantes to Grenoble.'

M. René Besnard, a Left Republican senator, and formerly an undersecretary in Millerand's Cabinet, betrayed the habit of cautious optimism ac-

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quired in Civil-Service environment. He said: 'I am the enemy of great programmes, the enemy of great ideas that seek to overturn too roughly the parliamentary edifice. I am a champion of slow evolution.' And in conformity with this he prognosticated 'no great changes' as a result of the coming election. 'The Left will win seats and votes, that is certain, and this will evidently influence the deputies of other parties. But I do not think the policy of the country will be seriously modified.' The senator wished to see the *Bloc National* defeated because it 'does not represent anything precise, and classifies men and parties of very different opinions under a false label.'

Henry de Jouvenel, editor-in-chief of *Le Matin*, and a senator, was the only one of the political leaders quoted who ridiculed the idea of a victory for the Left. '*Bloc de Gauches* — I don't believe it. I believe there may be a slight shifting toward the Left. Yes, slight, and probably it will swing the majority. But it won't mean anything. It won't have any influence. . . . The Radicals will gain some seats, and so much the better, for the Radicals represent most closely the moderate opinion of the country.' Speaking of M. Poincaré he said: 'I consider that he plays domestic politics abroad and foreign politics at home. . . . Furthermore, that his present policy is exceedingly popular. It is better not to disturb him.'

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THE GREEK ELECTIONS

POLITICAL sentiment in Greece seems to swing from the Left to the Right and from the Right to the Left again with extraordinary rapidity. Doubtless this is explained largely by the leading part foreign relations play in public affairs, and the sensational ups and downs of the country's military fortunes during the last few years. Venizelos and his near-Republican supporters were turned out unceremoniously at the first post-bellum election, and the former King was restored amid scenes of exaggerated Royalist enthusiasm. Now, only three years later, the country reverses its verdict with almost equal emphasis.

The recent victory of the Republicans or near-Republicans is the fruit of the revolution that followed Greece's military disaster in Asia Minor a year ago. Naturally the Royalist Government in power at that time was held responsible for the country's misfortunes — and all evidence seems to show that this opinion was only too well justified. Since the military revolution that overturned that régime, the new managers of Greece have been fully occupied restoring discipline in the army and reconstructing the demoralized Civil Service. An attempt of the extreme Royalists under General Metaxas — who is reputed to have strong German sympathies — to recover control of the government by a military overturn a few months ago was such a complete failure as to destroy the little prestige that this Party still retained. Since then military courts have been trying the mutinous officers, whose troops, however, were granted an immediate amnesty.

Therefore the recent elections may have occurred under considerable moral duress, but Monarchists and Republicans fairly outdid each other in verbal courtesies to their opponents. The Republicans rather plumed themselves upon allowing free criticism of the existing Government, while the Monarchists were almost effusive in their professions of future loyalty to whatever form of government the people might adopt.

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POLAND

POLAND illustrates the oft-forgotten truism that a country may be funda-

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mentally prosperous while its Government is financially embarrassed. This year's crops, with the exception of wheat, are much larger than before the war. For instance, the rye crop is 16 per cent, barley 19 per cent, oats 36 per cent, and potatoes 17 per cent greater than the average of 1909–13. During the first half of the present year, the excess of exports over imports was estimated at nearly $8,000,000. Simultaneously, however, the depression of the currency is so rapid that it is no longer sufficient to adjust wages every fortnight, in order that the working population may make ends meet; and the latter are vigorously demanding that the wage scale be revised weekly. Within a fortnight during October the Polish mark lost nearly two thirds of its value, and a rise of the exchanges by 25 per cent or more a day has ceased to be exceptional. One result is to lower the revenues from taxation, and thereby to increase the pressure to issue more bank notes; for the taxpayers, by deferring payments until just before a penalty falls due, can settle their accounts with the Government for a fraction of the sum — as measured by the purchasing power of money — that they would have paid had they settled their tax bills promptly.

Of late Poland has experienced a decided and very self-conscious swing to the Right. The Government press is jubilant over the appearance of 'a great wave of reaction against Socialism in Europe.' Mussolini and the Italian Fascisti are glorified, and Mr. Witos, the local peasant leader, and his Party have been for the moment pushed into the background. Skepticism exists, however, as to the permanence of this new political orientation. The Labor people are putting up a stiff resistance to what they consider the reactionary measures of the Government, and bloody fighting between strikers and soldiers has occurred in Krakow. More than twenty were reported killed on both sides, part of the cavalry was disarmed, and the strikers for a time controlled a considerable section of the city. There is little prospect that the peasants, who constitute the strongest single political element in the country, will long tolerate a régime overtly hostile to their demands for a subdivision of the big estates.

Among the rumors concerning Polish foreign policies is an odd report from the Vienna correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, to the effect that a Polish-Bavarian arrangement is being discussed unofficially by responsible and veteran politicians, for a regrouping of political forces in Central Europe: —

> I understand that the movement is favorably viewed by the Vatican and is under Jesuit guidance. I am unable to say to what extent it is supported by French clericalism. Its motto is 'Catholicism against Protestantism.' I have received from a sure source outlines of the 'Great Green Plan.' They are as follows: —
>
> 1. Bavaria is to separate from Germany. It is also proposed that she might seek union with Austria, but this depends on circumstances and on the attitude toward the plan when it has been carried out. The Reichswehr is to be divided among the German States, so that it will cease to be a national army.
>
> 2. Poland is to refrain from opposing the dismemberment of Germany.
>
> 3. The promoters of the plan rightly fear that the Czechs will oppose it as soon as they become aware of its existence. Poland, therefore, is to obstruct any active opposition on the part of Czechoslovakia.
>
> 4. In exchange for these services Poland is to receive East Prussia.

*

TRADES-UNIONISM ABROAD

SINCE 1921, according to a review of European labor movements in *Hansa*, there has been a steady decline of trades-union membership. This is due

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mainly to the world-wide economic crisis, assisted by internal dissensions between Socialists and Communists and in some instances between Socialist and Christian unionists. We have already referred to a heavy falling-off in the membership of British unions, with a corresponding loss of income. Although there has been no such marked economic crisis in France as across the Channel, the same phenomenon is observed in that country, where the Communists have seceded from the General Confederation of Labor. Italian unions have naturally paid a considerable toll in membership to the Fascisti. Germany, in spite of her economic distress, records a larger union membership than any other country — exceeding 8,000,000 at the close of last year. In Austria and Czechoslovakia, and also in Hungary, a rapid growth of Christian Trades-Unions is the outstanding feature of the past two years.

In Switzerland the total membership has declined from nearly 224,000 to less than 150,000, the loss being relatively highest among women employees, where the falling-off in membership exceeds 50 per cent.

Scandinavian unions are divided on the question of Communism. The Moscow wing in Norway has formed a separate Labor Party. Of twenty-nine Communist members of the Storthing, fifteen belong to an anti-Moscow section and fourteen to the Moscow section. The breach between Socialists and Communists is reputed to have weakened the trades-unions of Sweden, Finland, and Esthonia. Last year, when the Spanish Labor Congress opened, the Communists fired at a speaker during the opening session, wounding two men, one of them mortally; and until the present military government was set up, the Labor movement in that country continued under stormy auspices. The Spanish Federation of Labor is making every effort to form a Spanish-American Trades-Union Federation.

THE INDIAN CHURCH

THE *Living Age* has previously called attention to the extension of the self-determination movement among non-European races to the religious field. An interesting phase of this has developed in India in connection with the independence agitation in that country. Early this year Indian Christians from all the provinces, including many native pastors, held a conference at Ranchi, where they adopted a resolution urging on all the churches the necessity for a thorough study, not only of church organization, but also of the fundamentals of Christian doctrine — apparently in the light of Europe's falling away from Christ's true teaching. The resolution suggested the formation of native groups in different centres 'for the purpose of interpreting Christ to India in worship, evangelization, education, literature, and social welfare.'

It should be observed that many missionaries working in India are now convinced that it is the right policy to give the native Christians freedom to develop according to the genius of their own race. Indeed, the Anglican Church has taken definite steps in this direction. It has proposed an India Church Measure, by which the Indian branch of the Church would cease to be an appendage of the Established Church of England. The Bishop of Madras recently issued an explanatory statement summarizing the project as follows: (1) freedom for the Church of India to choose its own bishops; (2) freedom to hold its own synods and to devise measures for the good of the Church; (3) freedom to adopt its own expressions of faith, worship, rites, and ceremonies.

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Naturally many British residents of India are protesting bitterly against these proposals. Some of them advocate organizing separate churches for Indians and Europeans, to avoid some of the consequences they dread. The Church authorities, however, frown upon such a proposal as a virtual 'abandonment of the Christian Church.'

VILFREDO PARETO ON PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

THE recently deceased Italian sociologist, Vilfredo Pareto, was all his life extremely cautious as to drawing practical conclusions from his sociological studies. However, shortly before his end, he broke this rule by composing a small manuscript that was printed first in the Naples *Mezzogiorno* and then in the *Giornale economico* of Rome. The editors have entitled it, 'The Political Testament of Vilfredo Pareto.' It treats chiefly of relations between the legislature and the executive. This brings the author to the question of proportional representation, of which he was an ardent advocate in his earlier years. His zeal cooled off later, but still he did not recommend a return to the system of majorities. He believed that Parliament should give expression to the feeling and the state of mind of the whole country, and that proportional representation results in the election of a Chamber that fills such a rôle better than one elected on the principle of majorities.

The dismemberment and multiplication of political groups which proportional representation causes weakens the efficiency of Parliament. Pareto, however, thinks that this weakness is a thing to be desired; for supreme power should be in the hands of an élite of competent men who follow public affairs closely all their lives and come to know them well. From this élite a State Council or Ministry should be selected. Consequently, to proportional representation should be added a provision giving larger powers to a body other than an elected Parliament. Among other things, the ideal Parliament of Pareto has the power to reduce appropriations asked by the Government; but it does not possess the right to enlarge them.

One logical result of proportional representation, therefore, should be greatly to increase the authority of certain councils of experts and executive officers.

MINOR NOTES

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JEAN FABRY, Rapporteur to the Army Commission of the Chamber of Deputies, has contributed a rather sensational article to *Intransigeant* upon illiteracy in the French Army. Upon an average, only two out of ten of seven hundred recruits of twenty years of age, just received by two French infantry regiments, could be classed as educated in the ordinary sense of the word. Of the remaining eight, five upon an average knew how to read and write a little, two were able to spell with great difficulty and to write illegibly, while the eighth was totally illiterate.

In order to show that these figures, which are even more depressing than our American mentality tests at the time of the war, are fairly representative, Colonel Fabry points out that these recruits came from thirty-one different Departments, mostly from the highly developed northeastern districts. They were drawn from all classes of occupation, but mostly from agriculture. A very large proportion of them had no idea where the Treaty of Peace was signed, and nearly all were unable to say who made the laws of the country.

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THE *Rentenmark*, the new German monetary unit, is an indirectly secured note — the security being a mortgage or first trust upon agricultural estates and industrial and commercial enterprises. The mortgages are deposited in the Rentenbank and Rentenmarks are issued in exchange. The conditions of issue are criticized on the ground that the interest rate of the mortgages — 5 per cent — is lower than the current market rate. Consequently the mortgages will not command par. It is argued, however, that they will reach that basis when business conditions improve.

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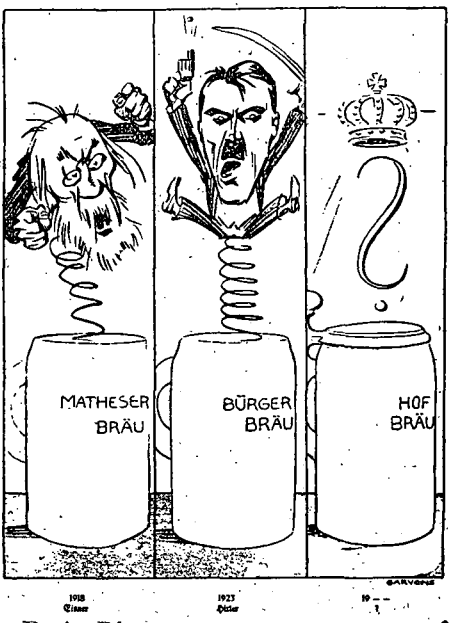
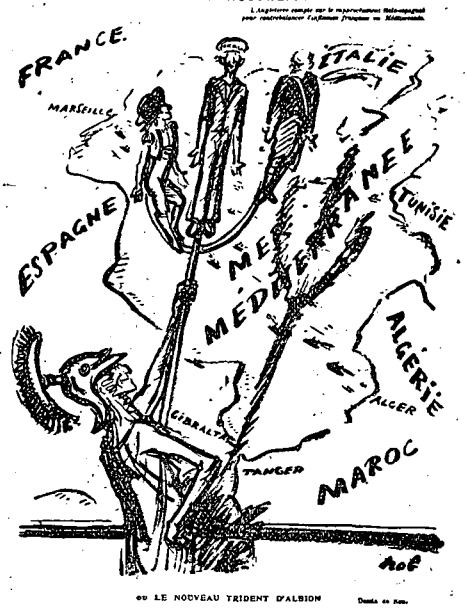
CARTOONS OF THE WEEK

TOKYO *Yorudzo* describes what it conceives to be the present status of the Chinese railway situation by the following cartoon, showing John Bull and Uncle Sam in full control of the lines: —

Simplicissimus illustrates the history of Bavaria since the war in three panels, picturing Eisner Communism, Hitler Nationalism, and the foreshadowed concluding act of the drama: —



Paris *Rire* presents a new aspect of Britannia's Trident under the title, *Mare Nostrum*, with the comment: 'England is counting upon the rapprochement of Italy and Spain to counterbalance French influence in the Mediterranean.'



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THE GERMAN FOOD PROBLEM

BY A BERLIN CORRESPONDENT

From the *Times, November* 29, 30, *December* 3
(London Independent Conservative Daily)

One of the last actions of Dr. Stresemann in his capacity as Chancellor was an appeal to the Red Cross organizations of the world for investigation and assistance in the food problem that now confronts Germany. It is more a money problem than a food problem; the chance phrase of Count Westarp, the leader of the Junker Party in the Reichstag, that Germany might starve with bursting barns, was not a rhetorical flourish but a sober fact. The harvest was of a very high average; the food is in the country, and the problem is how to get it to the people.

Germany passed on October 15 from control to decontrol, and the usual difficulties attended the process. It happened also that just at that moment a fresh period of inflation set in, the effect of which was to render it extremely difficult for the bakers to raise the money necessary to pay for fresh stocks.

The food is there, yet there is undoubtedly considerable want among the population. Want is a difficult thing to analyze. One may dismiss a good many of the stories that reach England as belonging to the psychosis of charity. Starving people do not habitually fall dead in the Berlin streets, nor do Berlin children die like flies — though I have seen statements in print that they do. But if they did they would have appeared in the death-rate statistics, which give no such indication. In fact, the first six months of 1923 showed a considerable improvement in public health, especially in regard to epidemics. The infant mortality shows no appreciable advance on 1913. The death rate for all ages in the first nine months of 1922 was 18.5, compared with 17.3 for the corresponding period of this year, which seems to dispose of the more exaggerated stories.

Equally unreliable are the observations of chance travelers who come back and say the Germans are the most flourishing people in Europe, better clothed and wearing better boots than the corresponding class in England, always eating and looking strong and well fed. They are wearing the clothes and spending the last money of the inflation.

Standards of life in Germany vary in comparison with other countries, between district and district and between the town and the country. In discussing so complicated a question as the feeding of the people it is necessary to agree on the meaning of terms. It might, therefore, be as well to leave the word 'starvation' out of the matter altogether, because no two people are quite agreed as to what is implied.

The class in Germany that feels the pinch most at present is the upper middle class. It has been most cruelly exploited by what the German financial experts cynically name 'the inflation tax'; its reserves and, in some cases, its entire income have gradually dwindled away. Of the productive middle class, however, the professional men, doctors and lawyers, long ago

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adjusted their business affairs to the prevailing conditions, and to-day they do not dream of giving their services for paper marks on the old basis. The higher official classes, which form a very large proportion of the community, are very badly paid. They always were, but not to the degree prevailing to-day. Others of the middle classes, such as engineers, journalists, and artists of all kinds, are hardest hit of all and, as usual, they are the class from whom it is most difficult to obtain exact information. Hard cases make bad averages, but their average of hard cases is certainly very high.

Of the unproductive middle class, those who have suffered most are the pensioners. Pensions have been adjusted from time to time, but it is safe to say they have never been brought anywhere near the proportionate standard of living the respective pensioners enjoyed before the war. On them has fallen, perhaps, more than on any other class the full realization of the truth that the world is a dearer place to live in than it was before the war.

It is frequently stated that inflation 'has wiped out' the rentier class in Germany. What is meant, of course, is that in a great number of cases it has wiped out the capital and income of the rentiers. As a rule one finds that those who retired on earned fortunes have returned, where possible, to the callings in which these fortunes were made. Those who retired on inherited money have been forced to enter some form of occupation. Many of these, coming out of retirement into occupation for the first time, unskilled and unadaptable, form pathetic figures, even in labor markets that are not overstocked.

It would be interesting, did space permit, to trace what has happened to pre-war invested money. Where it was invested in industrial, banking, or trade undertakings it may even have increased, and large sums have probably found their way abroad. The bad cases are those of persons usually belonging to the older nobility, the army, the State services, and so on. It was customary for these classes in pre-war days to invest their money in State securities, almost as a matter of patriotism and loyalty, though a good deal of it was also put into mortgages. The Government wiped out the State funds with such effect that a £3000 investment in Prussian bonds, on which before the war old Prussian ladies living in the country could be passing rich, is now absolutely worthless. The capital is literally not worth a farthing. For a long period also mortgages were paid off in depreciated paper at a fraction of their value.

This class may possibly become employers or employed, dependent or destitute. The round of destitution grows. The effect of inflation on social poverty is centrifugal and there is no doubt that the opportunities for small enterprise, employment, or even speculation are decreasing.

Hitherto the problem of the working class has been one of underpayment rather than unemployment. During the period of inflation some classes of labor have been unusually well off. The small shopkeeper and the coöperative business have been growing steadily poorer. It is only quite recently that the statistics of imports and exports show signs of a definite loss of markets, just as it is only quite recently that there has been in Germany any unemployment worth the name. German trade has for a long time been working on a basis of underpaid labor. Most workmen continuously struggled to obtain higher wages that would enable them to raise their standard of living, and they were continuously defeated by rising prices due

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to inflation. Serious unemployment and underemployment have found them in a condition in which they are unable to offer the necessary physical resistance, and both spirit and bodily efficiency decline.

The transition of prices from paper to a gold basis has slightly improved the workman's position as compared with pre-war wages, though part time in a good many industries has robbed this of any value. However, as near as I can calculate, the Government now pays its State workers at the rate of about 70 per cent of the pre-war wages. This is the standard which the trades-unions are trying to achieve for their skilled and half-skilled workmen. Unfortunately, the spending value of these wages is considerably lower than their pre-war value.

The cost of living is at least 140 per cent above the pre-war standard. The cost of production in the case of many articles and foodstuffs is under the peace price in gold. The cost to the consumer is considerably higher than the peace sale-price in gold.

Although the reports of numerous industrial companies, even lately, contain the expression, 'the works are full up with orders for abroad for a long time ahead,' the home market has almost completely collapsed, and most factories producing for home consumption are on short time or have closed down. An industrial and trade crisis is in full swing, while the boom in building, renewal of plant, and general reconstruction in the banking and industrial world is over. Even apart from the political unemployment in the Ruhr, there is a considerable increase in the general unemployment in unoccupied Germany.

One has the impression that the widespread collapse of morale, whatever may have been its causes, has had the effect of enlarging again the army of unemployables, or permanent unemployed. The unemployment question is being vigorously attacked, but the payment of relief is of a very inadequate character in view of the high cost of living. Social reformers in Germany are agreed as to the entire undesirability of unearned relief, and advocate the substitution of productive unemployment-relief works. These, however, require the expenditure of considerable capital, which the Government has not got and cannot raise.

In so far as it touches the problem of feeding the country, the unemployment question, which has only just begun to be acute, is a question of markets rather than of production. Therefore it is a little difficult to see why the present moment should have been chosen to raise the delicate problem of longer hours of labor for the employed. But this, like many another inconsistency in the food problem, is more closely related to politics than to sound economics.

The food catastrophe in Germany is inseparable from the money catastrophe. The agricultural interests were the first to repudiate the mark, and that for a very sound reason. Farming in Germany, as elsewhere, is carried on for profit and not as philanthropy. The farmer's capital is really turned over once a year only, and it will be readily understood that he is no longer inclined to part with the fruits of his labor for money that depreciates with the speed and certainty of melting snow.

The German harvest of 1923 was a bumper one. There have been many worse and not many better. The area under bread corn was 801,176 acres greater than in 1922. Grain imports were adjusted accordingly. The meat supply was a little below the average, but this was compensated for by increased imports. These amounted to

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766,100 double centners for the period from January to September inclusive, which was an increase of 35 per cent on the imports of 1922 and quite certainly covered the deficiency in the home market. It must be remembered also that the only figures available of home production of meat are those of the meat markets for beasts slaughtered. There is no method of arriving at the cattle purposely withheld from sale for financial or price reasons.

That this is done, however, there can be no doubt. A leading article published in the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* on October 24 last, entitled 'Food and Currency,' threw an interesting light on the grain problem. Commenting upon the recrudescence of queues outside the bakers' shops in Berlin, it said: —

> In Berlin the housewives stand in queues at the bakers' shops and many have to return home without bread. Yet we have had an excellent harvest, and when all the corn is at disposal the experts assure us that we shall have a supply of grain which will be equal to the result of last year's harvest plus what was imported.
>
> But the agriculturist only sells when he is in urgent need of paper marks, when wages are due, taxes payable, or other expenses are imperative and unavoidable. That this condition of affairs would arise was foreseen, and that is why in the forefront of all currency debates the demand is put forward for the creation of a real-value currency so that the harvest can be mobilized. . . . Although the grain comes only sporadically to market there is no question whatever of any shortage.

It is well known that the German farmer, rather than market his grain for paper marks, often prefers to use it for fattening his live stock.

It had been hoped that, with the introduction of the gold loan currency and the Rentenmark, the farmers might have been induced to send their produce more freely to the market. But the gold loan currency failed badly, and the Rentenmark even now has hardly begun to appear in general circulation. So far I myself have not seen a Rentenmark. It follows that bread, though an almost purely German product, remains dependent on the American dollar rate, and from time to time there is a shortage in the home market because of the unfavorable exchange. Were it not for this the price might be regulated and kept under control, though it would require a very severe hand to lift the corn and flour trades out of the toils of a whole chain of middlemen who deal with corn in bulk and decide where and in what quantities it shall be delivered.

Exchange rates play some queer tricks with food and coal prices in a country where there is no stable currency. Take the case of bread during the end of October, when there was an outbreak of rioting in Berlin and other cities. The price of flour on the Berlin produce market, at half-past two on October 23, was 300 billion marks per double hundredweight. At five o'clock the same afternoon the price was 460 to 470 billion marks. In the Berlin meat market, on November 20, sellers waited until the afternoon before putting their goods on the market at all because it was rumored that there would be a fall in the dollar exchange. The previous day's rate had been 2.5 billions, and in the afternoon the official rate was 4.2 billions. Prices were adjusted by the sellers in accordance with the latter rate; wages, of course, had been paid at the former.

It would be possible to multiply indefinitely these examples. They seem to point to the following conclusions: The solution of the food problem in Germany is dependent upon the restoration of German currency to a healthy condition. There is enough food in the country, but it will not be

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available until a sound currency is in circulation. The German farmer who holds the stock would rather use his harvest for fattening cattle than market it for bad money. The German public cannot buy at the present high prices because inflation has swallowed up its savings and reduced its wages. Thereby the standard of living has been lowered, and with it the efficiency of the working class. This is now reacting on production.

THE FATE OF THE RUHR

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

From *Frankfurter Zeitung*, *November* 22–25
(LIBERAL DAILY)

WITH interrupted communications the Ruhr is a shackled giant. It is helpless until these shackles are broken. The railways naturally are the most important, but regular postal service, canal and river service, and tram service are equally indispensable for the functioning of this vast organism.

The French have seized most of the railways and put them under an administration of ambiguous legal and economic standing. Only a small number of trunk lines are in operation. Their branches and feeders lie idle. Passenger traffic has been resumed in a modest way; trains are short and made up of poor rolling stock, and run on irregular schedules. The last fact is explained by the neglected condition of the roadbeds. Fares are high and must be paid in French coin. Most of the train crews are Germans, but the ticket-takers are Frenchmen.

Until a few days ago no freight tariffs were published; indeed, few freight trains were run. The management expected the shipper to make an individual bargain for each shipment. However, a printed freight tariff has just appeared. It is very simple and incomplete, but shows a disposition to discriminate against German manufacturers. All the old finely adjusted tariff arrangements, worked out on a basis of actual experience to serve the interests of this great industrial district, have been abolished.

The traveler sees evidences of dilapidation and disorganization everywhere. Rails and switches have been torn up, rubbish has accumulated between the tracks, freight yards are crowded with thousands of idle cars that have been stalled so long that grass is growing luxuriantly in their crevices. I have been able to obtain no estimate as to their number. It is doubtful if their contents, if they have any, will ever reach the persons to whom they were consigned. Personally I saw no freight trains carrying anything but Reparations coal.

Individual works and factories are further inconvenienced by the fact that their sidetracks have in many cases been barricaded or seized by the French. Such loading and unloading as occurs, for instance along the river quays, can go on only while French inspectors — who have to be paid by

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the shipper — are present. To appreciate what this means we should bear in mind that the traffic of the Ruhr up to the French occupation was denser than in any other part of Europe; nearly one third of the tonnage of the German Commonwealth was concentrated there, although it embraced but one half of one per cent of the country's area.

Naturally the best traffic-managers and transportation staff of Germany were required to handle this congestion, and at certain times of the year — for instance, during the height of the crop season — there was always more or less delay and confusion, even under the best conditions. Now the French are trying to get along with one fourth of the old staff, and these are for the most part reluctant and inferior workers. . . .

It would take many weeks to restore transportation service to its old efficiency under the most favorable conditions. Individual Frenchmen exhibit a real desire to better the situation, but they are prevented partly by their own inexperience and partly by constant interference from higher up — by that passive resistance that constantly emanates from Paris.

This unfamiliarity with the problems they have to face leads the French into peculiar errors. Not long ago they published propaganda statistics to show that the railways were carrying more provisions than they carried in times of peace. They made the mistake, however, of leaving entirely out of account water-borne traffic; and under normal conditions the great bulk of all the produce transported in the Ruhr is carried by water. To-day there is scarcely a barge plying on canal or river. The occupation authorities profess not to interfere with inland shipping, but an owner can never tell when his boat and its lading will be confiscated by some legal quibble, and takes no chances.

The tramways have always been an important means of communication in the Ruhr — and of late they have been almost the only means. The cars are still in good condition, although overcrowded, and are operating about the same as ever. Automobiles and trucks have declined in number on account of the general depression of industry. The French discriminate in favor of men operating cars made in their own country. A person who buys a Mathis car, for instance, gets a license and gasoline without difficulty.

Another obstacle to business is the irregularity, and in some places the complete cessation, of telegraph and telephone service. I recall the childlike delight of a banker whose office telephone gave a timid little ring for the first time in seven months. . . .

A man must visit this country to realize how a nation may become the victim of politics — how millions of industrious, peace-loving citizens may be driven to starvation. History records something similar in the days of the Roman Wars and Asiatic tyranny. But we do not think of such horrors as real. We cannot picture them as actualities. However, here you see a truly starving people, while only a few miles away Belgium and Holland live in plenty. Thousands of unemployed are clustered in the squares and on street corners — desperate, ragged, their caps drawn down over their glowering countenances, discussing their misery. They canvass conditions with growing indignation. All at once you note a long procession marching down the street. Some agitator has gathered it together. It rolls on, accumulating volume as it proceeds, until it encounters the police — then the thud of police clubs, revolver shots, howls, shrieks, curses, a panic-stricken flight, and a

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few wounded men left lying on the pavement. You can see the same thing repeated in any town. Riots multiply as starvation spreads, and the death list grows longer daily.

At every railway station I saw a dense cluster of men, — the 'Black Exchange,' — consisting of unemployed, sharpers, detectives, railway men, and travelers. Foreign currency passes from hand to hand; money-changers bid against each other; railway workers are changing their wages; travelers are buying French money to pay their fares; here a man sells his overcoat off his back, eager to make a penny to eke out his miserable unemployment dole. That dole is only twelve per cent more than in unoccupied Germany, where it will hardly buy a crust, and here prices are two or three times as high as there.

The misery of a people may be measured by the market price of rubbish. Even the quality of rubbish has grown worse. Here are men who have not had a warm meal for fourteen days. There are hungry, shivering children. It is utterly incomprehensible how they live. They had nothing saved up before the French came. They have not a piece of coal or a potato in their houses, for even the well-to-do lack these.

At one point where the unemployed came up to draw their dole they stood next to an almost empty show-window, where a pound of margarine was displayed. Its price was considerably more than their whole weekly allowance.

The few establishments that are still running on part time provide their employees with small quantities of flour, potatoes, and English coal. Some factories have sold all their stock on hand in Belgium or Holland to pay for food for their operatives. But more than half of the total population has no work whatsoever. Cases have occurred in Essen where people have refused their unemployment dole because it was too small to be worth collecting.

Communists are plotting, trades-unions are agitating, labor leaders of the better class realize how hopeless the situation is and are bereft of counsel. Is it strange, then, that blind, senseless pillaging is spreading everywhere? Placards are posted bearing the legend: 'Pillagers sin against the German people.' Everyone admits that this is true, but hunger is deaf to logic. In Düsseldorf whole wagon-trains have been pillaged and show-windows have been broken in and everything within reach seized or destroyed. In fact, the sound of window-smashing punctuates the night stillness so often in all these towns that it is familiar to everyone.

Emergency collections are being made to save the starving. A card is exhibited in most show-windows that still remain intact stating that the merchant is a member of a committee for relieving the unemployed. But that does not restrain the mobs. Carloads of provisions coming into town are seized and plundered. Gardens are stripped of their vegetables in a night. All forms of food-pillaging have become so common that the police are powerless. The French and Belgians look on with their hands in their pockets. . . .

This condition of anarchy prevents outsiders from sending goods into the district. What merchant will put the remainder of his savings into merchandise that may be seized by a mob before it even reaches him? . . .

Germans from the unoccupied portions of the country, accustomed as they are to wild fluctuations in the currency, stand appalled before the monetary chaos along the Rhine. Every town, every factory, every bank, every little neighborhood has been printing its own money. Commercial

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bodies made every effort to keep these issues within bounds, but 'necessity knows no law.' When the Central Government directed, on November 22, that this emergency money should no longer pass current, it was applying an impossible remedy to a hopeless situation. . . . At the best, improvement will be very slow.

On account of the absence of telephone and railway communication great variations in prices exist in neighboring places. Moreover, the value of money changes from town to town. In a journey of less than five hours I found the franc quoted as follows: in Essen at three hundred, in Gelsenkirchen at five hundred, and in Dortmund at three hundred and forty billion marks.

WITH THE SONDERBÜNDLER IN AIX

BY A CONFIDENTIAL AGENT

From *Kölnische Zeitung, November* 19
(Conservative Daily, British Occupied Territory)

On Sunday, October 28, we presented ourselves in disguise and with false passports at the Government House in Aix. Two Belgian armored auto-trucks with machine-guns ready for business stood before the entrance. A Belgian sentry and an official of the *Sûreté* were pacing up and down in front of the building. Three Sonderbündler, with green, white, and red ribbons in their buttonholes and green, white, and red arm-bands, stood in the doorway, armed with revolvers. Their caps were pulled down over their faces and they kept looking suspiciously in every direction as if they feared a surprise attack. We also discovered here the familiar heavy truck of the Th—— firm, which had been steered at high speed, by a skilled and steady hand, against the heavily barricaded doors of the Government House on the day the police tried to recover that building from the Separatists and their Belgian allies. The truck had shattered them as if they were fragile glass; and the Sonderbündler were now using it to close the doorway.

We explained to the guards that we wished to 'sign up.' They took us to a dirty little room that served as headquarters for the guard. Four slouchy young men, armed with policemen's sabres and revolvers, were sitting on a disorderly table. They told us to be seated and offered us white bread and margarine. The alleged officer of the watch looked at us sharply, listened to our story, and asked to see our papers. My passport, which gave my birthplace as Hanover, aroused his suspicion. After thinking the matter over for some time, he made up his mind that I was not qualified to become a regular member of the Rhenish Freedom Party. Even if I had lived twenty-nine years and nine months of my thirty years in the Rhineland, an exception could not be made in my case. But Hanover was a free state.

This profound wisdom fairly overwhelmed me and, secretly cursing my

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fictitious birthplace, I glanced at my companion with some embarrassment. Half of a cigarette, which one of the Sonderbündler took out of his mouth and offered to me, and which I relished better than the bread and margarine, comforted me somewhat.

A young, rosy-cheeked lad hardly nineteen years old, who was serving as interpreter, took us in charge and guided us to the Head Office, which was on the second floor. Here we found some German employees and a man who spoke bad German, who we later learned was an official of the Belgian *Sûreté Militaire*. After looking at our papers, the latter gentleman told us to wait outside. Apparently our papers were suspicious, because the photographs on them did not particularly resemble us in our present disguise.

Some ten minutes later armed Sonderbündler appeared and told us we were under arrest. Our protests were of no avail. We were taken to a little chamber filled with rubbish, next to the guardroom, our money was confiscated, our papers were taken away from us, and we were led to our place of confinement. It was a narrow room, so crowded that we could hardly sit down. There were no beds; we were obliged to accommodate ourselves as well as possible on the dirty floor. Fifteen other occupants were already there, some of whom had been in confinement for three or four days. Among them were four workingmen accused of Communist agitation, who had been aroused from bed at night by armed Sonderbündler and brought here. They had been horribly beaten up with police clubs, and loaded revolvers had been thrust in their mouths with the threat to blow their heads off if they did not betray the names of the Communist leaders.

Another prisoner was a merchant from Stolberg, accused of tearing down a Separatist poster. He had been stripped of every article of clothing he wore and then beaten insensible. All of the prisoners bore unmistakable evidences of cruel mistreatment. I myself was not struck, probably because I had voluntarily presented myself at headquarters.

After my companion and I had been under arrest about eight hours, during which we had made constant protest against our unjust imprisonment, we were taken before the head of the 'Criminal Division,' a gentleman who to all appearances was a foreigner; we were told later he was a Frenchman. After a short cross-examination, during which a certain Herr Hermann from Aix and a third person were present, and a close physical examination, we were returned to our place of confinement. About an hour later we were taken out again, cross-examined a second time, liberated, and directed to go to the military commander of the Sonderbündler, a former policeman of Aix named Fraunkron, who had been repeatedly disciplined for misconduct and finally dismissed from the service.

The next morning we were assigned to a detachment, where we had abundant opportunity to study the character of the Sonderbündler recruits and the nature of their organization. Almost all of the members of our detachment were shady characters, many of them criminals. None of them made any secret of being a jailbird. The men said openly that they had joined in order to get a good job paid for in francs, with a prospect of promotion. The commander of my detachment was a former night-watchman. The privates included two miners, two machinists, an office clerk, a telephone clerk, and a common laborer.

The morale of the Separatists was very bad. They grumbled and at times openly refused to obey orders, because

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the pay that was promised them from day to day was not forthcoming. The food provided was disgustingly dirty. The government archives had been ransacked and partly destroyed in a search for money, and since we had no bedding, and our men slept on tables and on the floor, we used the public documents as mattresses. Our midday meal, consisting only of string beans, was miserably prepared and only sufficient for half our party.

The Separatist garrison consisted of one hundred and seventy men, including the officers. We were divided into fifteen detachments of eight men, each under a leader. Five detachments formed a column. There was no discipline whatever; each man did what he pleased. We were well armed with some 35 carbines and 75 revolvers, most of them practically new. Most of the revolvers were new Brownings from the Belgian Herstal armory. However, part of them were the property of the Aix municipal police which had been taken from them after the Government Building was stormed. The Sonderbündler had a deep dread of the *Schupos*, or German security police, and we were in momentary expectation of a new attack. Our leaders kept telling us that the Belgian *Sûreté Militaire* would handle the Schupos and force them to disband.

About ten o'clock one morning I was directed to report at the office of Leo Deckers for service as a stenographer. I was previously taken to a barber to be shaved. Two Sonderbündler, armed with revolvers and police sabres, were on guard at the entrance of Deckers's reception room. A third heavily armed Sonderbündler acted as doorkeeper. I was not admitted until my papers had been carefully examined. I found in the reception room a man named Dorten, said to be a nephew of Dr. Dorten, the Separatist leader at Wiesbaden. Dorten introduced callers who wished to speak with Deckers. There were a great number of these, including many Belgian and French civilians.

All the Separatists leaders were in a bad humor. I can hardly describe the attitude of their subordinates toward them, without causing incredulity in my readers. At one time the arguments and abuse became so violent that Dorten pulled a revolver and threatened to shoot a man. The Separatist recruits kept demanding their pay, but there was no money to give them. Finally most of the privates were disarmed as a precaution against mutiny, the only exceptions being the sentries and the column commanders.

Even the leaders were for the most part uneducated people. I was often handed communications from them filled with gross autographical errors, with the request that I write them out in correct German. My business consisted largely in typing requisition orders for bread, margarine, beans, and similar provisions.

A great crowd of women who had fled from the mob in Rheydt were gathered at the Government Building. They had no money and clamored to be sent back home. Deckers asked the Belgian railway officer in Aix to give him a quantity of unstamped tickets, so he could get these women back home, and his own men by rail wherever they were needed. The Belgian officer asked to have this request in writing, whereupon Deckers wrote an order for me to deliver.

Having learned as much as we wished about the Separatists, their number, and their organization, we felt that there was nothing to be gained by a longer stay among them. So we got permission to leave the Government Building, and did not return.

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DICTATORSHIP OF THE GREAT POWERS. II

BY ARTURO ORZÁBAL QUINTANA

[We call the attention of our readers to the editorial note introducing the first installment of this article in our last week's issue.]

From *Nosotros, October*
(Buenos Aires Literary and Political Review)

Ever since the Holy Alliance tried to extend to the New World the dictatorship of the Great Powers, and President Monroe was able to checkmate them, America has been practically excluded from a voice in European policies. The smaller States of our continent enjoy, although only in appearance, a privileged situation in the group of weaker Powers. The great European Governments that directed at their discretion the international policies of Europe, Asia, and Africa, were not able to impose their will in America. This is — in one of its aspects — the famous Monroe Doctrine.

Is it legitimate to consider America from the political point of view as a world apart? It is the home of twenty-one States that are to all appearances independent. They all possess similar forms of government, and in their relations among themselves they seem to observe, in a strict sense of the word, the fundamental principles of international law. They have set up a Pan-American Union — a coöperative organization that in theory guarantees the equality of all these Governments, great and small. America has no Supreme Council, no Conference of Ambassadors. To judge from official declarations, it is a continent of law and liberty, utterly different from old Europe, where force and injustice reign.

My opinion of this pretended international situation in America differs entirely from the ideas commonly held by those who are contented to look at the situation superficially, without penetrating to the heart of things, or by those who deliberately deceive themselves and others because it suits their interests to conceal the truth. I believe that the same policy of coercion that has guided and still guides the great European Powers in their dealings with the smaller nations inspires the despotic sway of the United States over Latin America.

An understanding of what the Monroe Doctrine is will give us a key to the true situation. Without going into details, which would take more space than I have at my disposal, let me merely recall that this Doctrine, while perfectly definite and precise in prohibiting European intervention in American affairs, has never pretended to prevent an American nation from seizing the territories or otherwise impairing the independence of its neighbors. The vast domain that Mexico was forced to cede to the United States, the secession of Panama from Colombia, the economic and political vassalage of the West Indies and Central America to Yankee capitalism, illustrate this.

Wilson tried to rectify the exclusive and unilateral character of the Monroe Doctrine; that is, he proposed to repudiate — only verbally, of course —

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the imperialism of the Great Republic. He went still further. He tried to make the principle proclaimed by Monroe one hundred years ago a barrier against all imperialism that attacked the liberty of any nation, not only in America, but in the whole world. That was the substance of the historical message he delivered to the Senate in January 1917. Less than two months previously American naval forces had arbitrarily occupied the territory of Santo Domingo, abolishing outright the independence of one of the Republics that enjoy 'equality before the law' in the Pan-American concert. The tragic contradiction between his words and these facts is characteristic. It forms to-day, as it formed in the past, the indelible seal of Yankee policy.

Certain facts associated with the Treaty of Versailles should be recalled, because they illustrate how Yankee capitalism threw off the mask with which Wilson tried to conceal its ambition to rule all America.

The first draft approved by the Commission entrusted with formulating the Covenant of the League contained an article in which the signatory Powers obligated themselves to guarantee mutually their political independence and territorial integrity. No mention whatsoever was made of the Monroe Doctrine, although this article involved extending the substance of that Doctrine to international relations throughout the world. But this project had to be modified at the initiative of President Wilson, under the practically unanimous pressure of the plutocracy of his country. The final Covenant incorporated in the Treaty of Versailles contains, as Article XXI, the following statement: —

> Nothing in this Covenant shall be deemed to affect the validity of international engagements, such as treaties of arbitration or regional understandings, like the Monroe Doctrine, for securing the maintenance of peace.

After this fashion the representatives of the victorious Powers incorporated the Monroe Doctrine in international law, but they did not define that Doctrine. It is obviously wrong to call it a 'regional understanding,' since the Republics of America have never formally agreed among themselves as to its meaning.

Should a conflict arise as a result of this failure to specify what the Monroe Doctrine means, would the League of Nations be called upon for a practical definition? The official British commentary on the League Covenant answers in the affirmative, maintaining that the principles of the League incorporated in Article X represent an extension of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine to the whole world.

The Senate of the United States, in debating the League Covenant, voted a reservation to the effect that the United States would not permit the arbitration or investigation by the Assembly or Council of the League of Nations of any question that in the opinion of the United States involved the policy pursued by that country for a long period and known as the Monroe Doctrine. The Senate asserted that this Doctrine was entirely outside the jurisdiction of the League of Nations; it stated in clear language that, if the Government of the United States should decide to-morrow to occupy with its arms the territories of any American Republic under the intangible and mysterious Doctrine of Monroe, no one in the world would have the right to oppose its action.

Consequently the Latin-American nations, no matter what their relative strength, occupy, with respect to the United States, the same precarious position that weak nations in other

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parts of the world occupy with respect to the Great Powers in general. We might almost say that our case is worse, for in practice the despoliation and oppression of small countries by strong nations in other parts of the globe is checked by the rivalry among those nations. No Great Power, however, dares raise its voice against the imperialist policy that the United States, clothed in the hypocritical mantle of the Monroe Doctrine, is pursuing in a constantly more threatening form in our continent. When Lloyd George discovered, after three years' futile struggle, that an Allied campaign was fruitless against New Russia, he was able to calm the hostility of the French creditors of that country. The latter in turn checkmated the belligerent designs of England against Angora. But no Government has indicated to the United States its disapprobation of the iniquitous methods which that Government has employed in dealing with the revolutionary Government of Mexico.

It is important to bear in mind that Pan-Americanism, which may at times seem to us a living incarnation of international law, is something very different from that in the eyes of the Yankees. We should remember that Blaine, who started the series of useless Conferences that have occurred at intervals since 1890, was making what proved to be a futile effort to create a continental customs-union, to lay the foundations of a super-State, whose real character was synthesized later by Secretary Olney when he said: 'The United States is practically sovereign in this continent.' Subsequent events, down to our own times, have proved how hollow are the declarations of friendship and esteem with which the ruling statesmen of North America try to conceal their ulterior motives. What is certain is that they consider us an inferior breed destined to be subjected sooner or later, both morally and materially, to the Great Republic. What they really mean by Pan-Americanism is a vast colonial empire governed from the White House.

Extraordinary as it may seem, we have in Latin America many a defeatist to whom the absorption of our nationalities by Yankee imperialism seems the best thing that could happen to us. Guillermo Subercaseaux, Professor of Political Economy in the University of Chile and former Minister of Finance, states this thesis as follows, in an article entitled 'Pan-Americanism from an Economic Standpoint,' in the *Bulletin of the Pan-American Union* of September 1923: —

> Why should we reject the Pan-American consortium to which the United States is inviting us? Such an action would be understood if the invitation had come from a nation that we believed unworthy of our friendship. But as cultured people of America we all can appraise at their true worth the outstanding qualities of the great Anglo-American civilization. Its universities and scientific centres, its institutions of government, its profound respect for individual liberty, its tolerance in matters of religious belief, its devotion to progress, place the United States in a position that honors not alone America, but all civilization of the present day. . . . The uniting of peoples in great entities, confederations, empires, or simply unions, has always revolved about the strongest, because the greatness of a people has its power of attraction as has the greatness of a star.

In my opinion such acceptance of the imperialistic hegemony that the Yankees are exercising over the nations of Latin America not only would be unworthy of our national honor, but would be equivalent to sacrificing upon the altars of voracious and ambitious capitalism the true interest of our people. The history of Mexico under

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Porfirio Diaz illustrates clearly the abject condition to which a country sinks that, in pursuing material progress benefiting solely its privileged classes, submits to the control of foreign finance. The actual condition of Porto Rico, whose laboring population lives in oppression and misery, demonstrates forcibly the future to which the Latin Americans must look forward if they hesitate to repel the advances of Yankee imperialist capitalists.

We must maintain intact our national sovereignty if we wish to avoid aggravating the sad situation that we occupy in common with other proletarian States. Eternal vigilance alone will save us from losing the fruits of a century of freedom and resuming the humble status of colonies.

I have shown in this brief study that only the strong are secure in their liberty. The conclusion from this is obvious. We must be strong. But in striving to be strong we must act intelligently. We must bear in mind that the only really dangerous enemies of the small States are the Great Powers. We must likewise remember that the perils that threaten Latin America come more from moral weakness than from material weakness. We are morally weak to resist the threat from the North because our civilization is primitive compared with that of the Anglo-Saxon, because our people are half illiterate, because our political standards are abominable, because our finances are in chaos and bear no relation to our natural resources, which Anglo-Saxon capitalism covets, because we are constantly at odds among ourselves, and, last of all, because we have no unity to oppose to the national cohesion of the Yankees.

We shall never discover the secret of preserving our liberty in a world where the Great Powers have ruled so long if we continue to take up arms against our own brothers. We must begin to apply a remedy where our weakness is most serious. Our public finances are more unreliable than our military and naval forces. Let us not make them worse by maintaining an armed peace. Let us remember that every new cannon we buy from foreign manufacturers of death, every new cruiser or submarine we contract for from foreign shipyards, means one more step toward the abyss of national bankruptcy. Let us not forget that the Wall Street creditor is waiting for us at the bottom of that abyss, ever ready to compromise in return for our liberties.

A Latin-American Union should be the corner stone of our security as free nations. Mutual improvement and mutual understanding should be our motto. Let us hold high the ideal of the patriots to whom we owe our emancipation, whose love of country embraced the whole continent from Mexico to Cape Horn. And if some day we shall unite to form the great and powerful nation of which they dreamed, then, and then only, shall we be respected and treated on a footing of equality by the Great Powers.

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THE LAUSANNE TRIAL

BY F. DE RABOURS

[The assassination of Vorovskii, a representative of the Soviet Government at the Lausanne Peace Conference, by Conradi and Polunin, two Russian émigrés who had suffered greatly at the hands of the Bolsheviki, is of course familiar to our readers. The trial of the assassins was widely reported and their acquittal by the jury was received with some surprise. The following article by a Swiss writer and in a Swiss journal calls attention to the unique place the trial occupies in legal and political history.]

From *La Semaine Littéraire, November 24*
(Geneva Weekly Review)

The great trials that agitated the Republic of Athens occurred before the tribunal of the Heliasts — that is, in a public square. Many of these would leave no record on the pages of history were it not for the great masterpieces of eloquence which they evoked. They are for the most part in a class by themselves, because they thus gave a sort of accidental immortality to men of second rank and exalted to the level of historical events their conduct, although it was otherwise hardly entitled to be remembered. The same is true of several clients or adversaries of Cicero. Who would know to-day, for example, of the extortions of Verres or the profligacy of Claudius if the great master of Roman eloquence had not pilloried them before posterity as classical examples of official rapacity and political degeneracy?

Neither did the modern trials of men like Lucheni, the assassin of the Empress of Austria, or Caserio, the assassin of President Carnot, involve elements of intrinsic historical interest. These trials were little else than proceedings to decide the fate of criminals who were abnormal fanatics, mentally unbalanced, and largely irresponsible for their acts. Their crimes called for no great discussion of principles. The offenders had no political programme, no clear doctrine — they were merely primitive creatures dominated by a cruel instinct to kill.

Indeed it is difficult to define exactly what constitutes a great historical trial. However, many might be cited in France, during periods of great moral and political ferment, that left a permanent imprint upon political institutions. They sometimes started serious popular agitations; in other instances they crystallized public opinion and settled for all time an issue that had previously been a source of constant and tumultuous discord.

Great judicial dramas reveal the manners and habits of a people better than memoirs, letters, or documents, and at least as well as the great masterpieces of the stage. But it is not the rank of litigants, the atrocity of crimes, or the eloquence of advocates that constitutes a great historical trial; it is rather the content of the case itself, the milieu in which conflicting principles are debated, the historical moment where great popular interests clash or social forces come to a head — in a word, it is the ensemble of surrounding political circumstances of which the judicial drama is often the crucial focus.

Every age impresses its character upon its State trials. In the Middle

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Ages they were generally associated with the Church. All the themes that dramatists love to weave into their picture of human life appeared at that time in some ecclesiastical relation. The individual struggled against powerful corporations, but his complaints found no echo beyond the proud walls of law courts or the bare walls of monastic halls. At that time public opinion was formed too slowly to have an effective influence on the course of justice. To be heard in those days one must speak as the mouthpiece of the privileges and prerogatives of a powerful merchants' guild or a great religious body.

Later, in the fifteenth century, a new and as yet untested sentiment manifested itself in France — patriotism. The great historical trials of that period sprang from the opposition of the individual to the power of the King and the sway of the Pope. That was the time when Joan of Arc raised her inspired voice against the invader, and the trial for the rehabilitation of the Maid of Orleans throws a clearer light than any other episode of the time upon the new sentiments stirring among the masses. Already the real State trial had appeared.

In the sixteenth century, during the religious wars that desolated France for forty years, the public took a passionate interest in the debates and incidents of the suit of the University against the Jesuits. Atrocious murders, and even the assassination of two Kings, were relatively unimportant episodes in the public mind compared with that.

Great trials obviously are distinguished from other trials by the fact that they involve interests superior to those of the parties involved — that they have points of contact with the eternal rights of man.

The Lausanne trial was characteristic of the times in which we live. Everything was international. The defendants and the advocates belonged to countries immeasurably remote from each other, not only geographically, but in their history and their political conceptions. Furthermore, Conradi committed his bloody deed during a Peace Conference.

In order to secure from the jury a verdict for their clients, or the admission in their behalf of evidence of violent provocation or irresistible impulse, the attorneys for the defense drew an indictment against Bolshevism. They were well advised, for they were pleading before a jury free to consider, if it so deemed proper, both questions of doctrine and questions of equity. The defense painted a gripping and tragic picture of conditions in Russia, thus putting the main issue in its actual setting, and emphasizing the political and international aspect of the trial.

In theory it was not permissible to plead violent provocation — though this lay within the discretion of the jury — unless the provocation and the act of the accused were practically simultaneous. Even if it were possible, by an extension of this principle not generally accepted in law, to show that the indescribable cruelties of Lenin and Trotskii and their agents constituted a violent provocation for Conradi, the defendant must be found guilty, but no minimum sentence was fixed by the statute. However, the Vaud penal code provides in addition, with very elastic phraseology, that the accused may be acquitted where his deed was intended to defend himself against an irresistible power. From this it followed, and quite naturally, that the Soviet Government was made in fact a party to the trial. It was theoretically haled before the court. Indeed it employed an attorney for its defense.

The thesis of the attorneys for the accused was briefly this: Conradi and

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Polunin could not hope to secure justice before any tribunal in existence, or reparation for the wrongs they had suffered, or the punishment of the authors of those wrongs. Consequently they had no other recourse in order to obtain justice than to strike down representatives of the Government that had made them suffer, that had killed the relatives of one of them, that had ruined their country and reduced it to a state of servitude. This was a bold and dangerous argument to present before a law-abiding democracy.

Yet that argument was the principal and the distinctive feature of this unique trial. The defense attacked the Government of the Soviets with all the vigor and resources at its command. That Government had not been recognized by Switzerland, and could not be protected by the Swiss authorities from such attacks, which under other circumstances would never have been tolerated because they were contrary to the recognized principles of *comitas gentium*.

Russia being *de jure* an outlaw nation internationally, its leaders and present rulers are not considered as the legitimate representatives of their country. So, for the first time in legal history, a juristic situation arose that, joined with a peculiar constellation of facts, made it possible, and indeed indispensable, to substantiate by evidence before a judicial tribunal a broad indictment of this kind against another Government.

Common rumor, which is not generally admitted as evidence, was given weight here, and quite rightly, for the purpose was to ascertain as accurately as possible if the despoliations and criminal acts reported by the press, and through other channels, had actually been committed, not only in detached and isolated cases, but in accordance with premeditated plan and a policy regularly followed by responsible officials, among them the victim Vorovskii and certain others.

Never has the prosecution of a Government offered stranger and more striking contrasts than this one at Lausanne. A jury drawn in a rural canton, conservative by heredity and conviction, democratic by tradition, republican by history, was called upon to give a verdict upon a technically criminal act committed within its own jurisdiction, and in doing so to pass judgment on the procedure and policies of alleged tyrants, called Communists or Bolsheviki, who still hold the fate of an immense empire — or its ruins — in their hands.

The defense argued: These men have committed crimes against humanity. They are accountable for them before the judges whom an historical accident has set up, as they are before the opinion of the civilized world.

Neither the great Panama trial, which lanced an abscess of political corruption in France, nor the Dreyfus case, where the stupid, narrow, and perverse obstinacy of a few army officers forced the Court of Cassation to vindicate the ideals of the Republic and liberty, can be compared with the trial at Lausanne. The Panama case and the Dreyfus case were national, although they aroused great interest beyond the borders of the country. But the Lausanne trial was in every feature an international criminal prosecution, in the age of the League of Nations.

The Vaud jury acquitted Conradi and Polunin by a minority vote. The hesitation the members felt was indicated in their replies. In spite of the extenuating circumstances that pleaded in favor of the accused, it was not generally expected that they would be acquitted. The penal code of Vaud contains articles which would have permitted reducing their sentence to short imprisonment. The impression pro-

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duced upon the jury by the pleadings must have been very strong indeed, to make good citizens of Vaud — who, as the world knows, are a hard-headed, unemotional people — render a verdict for acquittal. . . . Many people believe that it would have been more normal and more in accord with our traditions if the jury had found the accused guilty, although a mere trifling penalty were imposed. Had this been done, the majesty of the law would have been asserted, and the Provincial Parliament might have pardoned the prisoners later. That would have accorded better with the deep respect that the Swiss cherish in their hearts for the law.

RUSSIA AND THE LITTLE ENTENTE

[A report is current that Russia and Rumania have reached an agreement for the demilitarization of the banks of the Dniester. New documentary agreements are said to have been exchanged very recently between Poland and Russia. Other evidences exist of an active propaganda of understanding along Russia's western frontier. Presumably Mussolini's Government viewed the following article in the leading journal of their Communist opponents benevolently, for Italy is rumored to contemplate the recognition shortly of the Soviet Government.]

From *Avanti, November 29*
(Milan Official Socialist Daily)

Reports from Belgrade indicate that the next conference of the Little Entente, set for January 8, will discuss as the most important item on its programme relations between that body and Soviet Russia; 'because,' as this news-feeler puts it, 'all three Governments of the Little Entente wish to stabilize those relations by a common accord, and a general desire exists to resume those relations very soon.'

This desire, and pressure 'by practically all schools of political thought in Yugoslavia,' finds an echo in every political party of Czechoslovakia. And even the third member of this Entente, Rumania, declares through its most influential journals that its Government no longer objects to the recognition of the Russian Government now that it has reached an accord with that Government over the only controversy that divided the two countries — Bessarabia.

Another rumor is current, to the effect that the Belgrade Conference will see the definite adhesion, and perhaps the formal participation, of Poland in the Little Entente. A Polish observer will be present at all the meetings, in imitation of the American device that is rapidly becoming acclimated in Europe. The presence of such an observer is unquestionably the first step toward Poland's approaching membership in the Little Entente.

Even as constituted at present — that is, without Poland — the Little Entente is a predominantly Slavic group. Of the fifty million population it embraces, three fourths are Slavs. This racial influence explains in no slight degree the spontaneous sym-

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pathy that all these nations feel for Russia, the great mother of all the Slavs — a sympathy totally independent of the political institutions of the latter country. So when Poland formally associates herself with the present members of the Little Entente, the latter body will include practically all the Slavs of the West.

It is true that the present sentiment of the Polish Government — as distinct from the Polish people — toward Russia is not especially friendly, although the Cabinet is constantly professing its desire to maintain cordial relations with its powerful neighbor. But it is a capital error to ascribe this coldness of the Poles to dislike of the Soviet régime. That political dislike is confined entirely to the bourgeoisie, and is more than counterbalanced by the ardent sympathy for that régime cherished by the Polish proletariat. The causes for the distrust with which Polish statesmen regard Russia spring from several sources. They are largely a fruit of the bitter memories surviving from a long period of subjugation, of fear that Russia's spirit of conquest may revive. But such memories as these fade with the lapse of time, or will pass away when it is seen that Russia has sincerely renounced territorial ambitions in the West. However, a still deeper source of antipathy is the fanatical and bigoted hatred that the Polish masses feel for the Russian Orthodox Church. In the same way that Presbyterian Scotland easily reconciled itself to union with England, while Catholic Ireland never ceased to rebel against such association, the Ukraine, which belongs to the Eastern Church, lives in peace and absolute harmony with New Russia, while Poland cherishes constant suspicion and rancor against that country.

But it is not necessary to suppose that this attitude of mind, which is strongest among the ignorant peasants of the territories inhabited almost exclusively by Poles, will not gradually change. France, in her desire to place on Germany's right flank a strong State able to raise a powerful army, endowed Poland with such an excess of territory, above that to which she was entitled on truly national grounds, that half, and perhaps a majority, of the country's population is non-Polish. Of the twenty-eight million inhabitants of that country approximately fifteen million are Ukrainians, Galicians, Jews, Germans, Lithuanians, Ruthenians, and Little Russians. This is a paradoxical and intolerable situation that will ultimately settle itself in one of two ways: either the present artificial political agglomeration will break up of its own inherent instability, or the alien races will exercise a profound and not improbably a dominant influence upon the political policies of the country. In either case, a Pan-Slavic League will profit by the consequences.

This drawing-together of people of the same race is not a phenomenon peculiar to Eastern Europe. It is characteristic of all international movements since the war. There are more indications than ever of a formal understanding between the two great Anglo-Saxon Powers. Italy and Spain are coming closer together. All the dissociated fragments of the German race are at heart one with the German Commonwealth — Holland and Switzerland are aligning themselves openly with that harassed country.

This is not a phenomenon in which we Socialists should particularly rejoice; for as long as the bourgeois régime survives it merely means substituting race rivalries for national rivalries — no more than a new alignment of political and military competition. Considered from this point of view a Latin bloc opposed to an Anglo-

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Saxon bloc is by no means a guaranty of peace. But before we Socialists condemn the formation of such blocs we should ponder carefully two fundamental facts.

The first of these takes us back to the title of the present article. If among all these present or future political constellations there is one that does not necessarily represent a threat of war, that one is the constellation in which Soviet Russia plays a predominant rôle. We wish to impress this enormous service of the Russian régime upon our readers. Assuming the tendency that appears irresistible in our time, for people of the same blood to join in vast alliances, it is inevitable that the existing Anglo-Saxon constellation and Latin constellation will eventually be counterbalanced by a Slavic constellation. Now what would a group of Slavic nations have been under the leadership of the Tsar, or even under the control of a capitalist Russian Govèrnment? We should inevitably have had a resumption, on a more ambitious scale than ever, of the old Pan-Russian and Pan-Slavic schemes for occupying the Bosporus, Central Asia to India and beyond, and all Russia's border states. Every one of the countries recently emancipated from the old Empire — such as Finland, Esthonia, and Latvia — would be speedily reabsorbed. Two hundred million Slavs would have been placed at the service of militarism and imperialism. If this tremendous threat no longer exists, it is due solely to the fact that Soviet Russia, at the head of a Slav Confederation, is absolutely innocent of designing territorial or political aggression against her neighbors.

The second consideration is that — as apostles of peace and human fraternity have preached in every age — the grouping of peoples into larger political units is an indispensable preliminary step, before we can have the coming peaceful union of all mankind. When great racial groups have taken the place of the peppery little States into which Europe has been decomposed, we shall at least succeed in abolishing war among those tiny units. For centuries the cities of Lombardy — Milan, Lodi, Pavia, and Cremona — incessantly fought each other, until at last they were united in the Duchy of Lombardy. That Duchy eventually joined with Veneto and Emilia to form a larger political unit, and from that date the people of this considerable territory ceased to shed each other's blood in local wars as they had done throughout the Middle Ages. Similarly, the recent union of the five Soviet Republics with proletarian Russia assures all of these States reciprocal respect and mutual friendship.

Therefore, while it is probable that the regrouping of the bourgeois Governments that is proceeding perceptibly under our eyes constitutes a threat to the peace of the world, the regrouping of the Slavic Governments under the hegemony of Russia should be hailed with hope as the dawn of a happier era.

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BARBARISM

BY H. M. TOMLINSON

From the *Adelphi, November*
(London Literary Monthly)

It looked to me a definite check. There was no bridge. The bed of the stream was of white sand, but the water seemed queer, coming dark and quick as it did out of the forest. It had no name that I knew. The three Malays with the packs waded straight over up to the waist. Their eyes were fixed to the route; water or earth seemed all the same to them; they went lightly up the opposite bank and disappeared. I could not even hear them. The forest took them in.

My companion followed them, and it was my turn. But this was early in the first day of the journey, and it took me some seconds to understand that I too was expected to get wet. We are so used to the provision of bridges, with public houses on their hither side, that at first it appears to be an oversight on the part of Nature, and an affront to our dignity, to have to wet the shirt, and to go on walking as though it were dry. Odd, that chill coming through dry clothes; and how heavy it makes the boots!

I went on as though nothing had happened; but I knew something had happened. I had done more than cross from one side of a stream to the other. All the support of civilization, which we accept without knowing it is there, and so imagine we are supporting ourselves, was abandoned. I was on my own resources now, and realized that they were inadequate. I was carrying, for example, a rifle because of tigers and other possibilities, but the rifle only gave moral support to our Malays. I knew I could n't be so infernally quick as a tiger, and that the rifle therefore was no more to me than a burden which was already as heavy and unaccommodating as a load of sin.

Presently we came to another stream — but it was a river. It was turgid, swift, and quite wide enough, and was plainly very deep. A tree had fallen across it; its wet trunk, midway, was half submerged. Wading over was a joke to this. The barefooted Malays got across as easily as cats. My friend followed them; and when he was halfway over, and I had started and was well down the first greasy descent of the trunk's butt, wondering how many more seconds I should last, he fell. Somehow he managed to keep desperate finger-tips on a snag of the trunk, while the current stretched his legs and body downstream.

The Malays had gone on. I stood balancing over the water, helpless. He was some distance from me. There was nothing I could do. I shouted at him that if he let go — already I knew of him that he was a bit inclined to easy surrenders — if he let go he would have to die. He became energetic, and at last straddled the trunk and reached the shore. I have no idea how I got over with the gun.

So the day went on, while the jungle silently contemplated us. I was wet, hot, hungry, and tired, but fairly happy, and inclined to tell the tropical forest it could do its worst; for quite

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clearly, though it was a fascinating foe, yet it was an implacable one. It would grant nothing to us.

All right. Then one would have to be careful, and force concessions. There were still ten miles ahead of us of the roughest kind of travel before we should find a native kampong, when I met one of the Malay carriers coming back to me — I had been watching some ants, and was a long way in the rear. He was without his pack. He looked most woebegone. He shook his head in severe disapproval, and I gathered from him that the other white man had collapsed, was lying in the forest, and would not continue; he added that the night was coming, and the place was bad.

While kneeling in the damp trash beside the other white man, in the act of persuasion and even of abuse, I noticed my clothes were bloodstained, and found hanging to my ribs some leeches, already bloated. The revulsion was psychical. I was horrified, not hurt. Other leeches, as I then noticed and pointed out to my friend, were attached to him. Had n't he better get up? He glanced down at his body, and was up at once, in dismay. And he really did look as though he had met something much more formidable than he had expected. He was about done. But he pulled himself together, good man, and on we went.

We had a life of that sort for weeks. At times it was much worse than the first day. We ate when we could, and whatever we could get. We slept in places where fires had to be kept going at night to dissuade the wild beasts. The leeches nauseated me daily. We would wade across a river, then squash through a morass made by a herd of elephants; and when, climbing up a slippery bank out of that, fatigued and famished, you sprawled on your face, the hand snatched at a handful of thorns. When you rose you had to pick off more leeches. Down came the rain. There was no home to go to.

I will admit that at last, though I was glad I was there, I got rather nervous about it. Awake at night, lying on the ground, looking at the ghosts of the nearest trees fading as the fire declined, it made you feel a little queer inside to hear the half-moan, half-snarl, of a tiger. The forest seemed hanging intently over you, waiting in silence for something it knew was going to happen.

But we got out to the coast again at last; got out cheaply, too, for our foolish challenge of the wild against which society protects us. We suffered nothing but a little poisoning, through the insect bites and rough living. When, some weeks before, I first saw that native town on the shore of the China Sea, I thought it was barbarous enough, but then, coming upon it out of the wilderness, I realized that it was an outpost of London and Peking. Even the primitive altar in a field, which struck me as pagan enough when I noticed it on the outward journey, now seemed not so distantly related to St. Peter's. We were all right again, with known things about us.

Next morning I boarded a little coasting steamer for Singapore. She was shipshape and bright, my cabin was hung with chintz having a pattern of rosebuds, and the saloon table was as well ordered as that of a good hotel. The captain, nice man, listened to the tale of our fun upcountry, and then said: 'You'd like some news from home. Here's the papers by the last mail.' Most certainly, feeling secure with chintz curtains about us, and poisoned feet already less inflamed, we wanted news from England. The smiling little sailor reëntered with a week's bound numbers of the *Daily Mirror*. I opened the volume.

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The first sight of leeches hanging horribly to my body had not given me a worse shock. News from England! Then what a country! The blood-sucking worms, the jungle bugs which raised wheals, the fevers, the dark forest and the cataracts, and the rhinoceroses — if all that was savagery, then what was this? The natives we had met were certainly not barbarians. I had learned to like the Malays very much. They are a quiet, well-mannered, humorous, and hospitable people. They certainly have a war cry, which is both hair-raising and exhilarating when they are watching two bulls fighting, or are shooting dangerous rapids. But they are, it is fair to add, gentlefolk. Was I to be forced to admit that, compared with the Malays, my own countrymen were barbarians?

Now in the forest, on some anxious nights when sleep would not come, I had been sustained by the comforting thoughts of Waterloo Bridge at midnight, and a nook in Surrey, and some corners in Devonshire; things like that in this world, it was strangely certain, did exist, and they were heartening. But I felt a sudden despair for England, even in the China Sea, when I opened that newspaper, and saw England's life reflected in such pictures.

What a life! It would shame the natives of the Aru Islands. To open those sheets seemed to let fly an inane and fatuous blare. There was no sense in it. It was only a silly noise. Were these the pictures of a people which was going to rebuild a civilization that had been wrecked by war? Then there was little hope. I got, in that five minutes, the first real scare I had had in nearly six months' travel among Malay Islands. It was a very subdued adventurer who handed that volume back to the nice captain; for he realized that, if he were safely out of the jungle, there was *that* to go back to.

I had become used to the Malays. I had learned to understand, fairly well, their ways of living and of looking at things. After a while I had no doubt that they had rightly solved the problem of accommodating themselves to their circumstances. They are a happy folk. You hardly ever see an anxious face among them, and never a hungry child. They need no old-age pension. Their future is secure, if they will but give a brief time yearly to rice-fields, coconuts, and fishing-nets. But I am not at all sure to-day whether I understand the English, and that black doubt can be credited to the illustrated paper, the pictures of which I saw at the right perspective in the China Sea. I have not recovered from the shock.

There was an occasion when, years ago, returning from my first long journey in a difficult land, I stayed up all night so that I might have the earliest glimpse of an English light. Yet when somebody announced at lunch in the Channel the other day, 'Start Point is sighted,' I must confess that I examined my heart when I found that I was not thrilled. Who or what was wrong? It was a real trouble to me, to find that I was indifferent, for I knew that I was very glad indeed to be nearing home again. Yet was not England home? Well, say that one's home happens to be in England. That may express the subtle difference in one's mind, a difference which began about the end of the war and has been established by that more popular press in which the English seem to delight.

And the further truth is, when first adventuring in the streets of London recently, though I was as much at home in Ludgate Circus as I was a short while ago on the island of Ternate, — where you soon learn to find your way about, — yet there was a mind about me in Fleet Street which I found

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harder to enter than, say, that of the natives of Kota Bharu. Of evidence of Europe's disastrous plight I had been seeing enough as far away as the Pacific; ships everywhere were running with light freights, at a loss to owners, though the means to fill them was often abundant. Plenty of ships, plenty of harvests, and a great want in Europe; and hardly any business. So what the deuce some things meant in Fleet Street I could n't make out.

It was but fair to suppose, as it is the business of journalists to give the public what it wants, that the newspaper placards indicated what then chiefly occupied the minds of most of my own people. But those placards were Chinese to me. One sheet grieved: 'Bad News About Papyrus.' An honest paper, because, as a journalist, I know that editors don't like publishing gloomy stuff. But what did it mean? I could only conclude that Tut-ankh-amen's prayer book had been most unfortunately torn.

PLAYS WITH A PURPOSE

BY HENRY ARTHUR JONES

[*Mr. Jones's opposition to the 'theatre of ideas' is no new thing. It was he who devised for Mr. Bernard Shaw the amusing if unkind title of 'the polyfaddistic impossibilist,' and the echoes roused by his more recent onslaughts have not quite died down. Outside the dramatic field, his book,* My Dear Wells, *gave him opportunity for rough handling of another popular figure in 'advanced' thought. It is not without significance that his article appears in a highly Conservative newspaper.*]

From the *Daily Telegraph, November* 8
(London Conservative Daily)

A great number of theatregoers believe that the highest merit a play can have is that of enforcing some moral, religious, social, or political purpose. How many plays have been placed on a summit of lofty achievement because the glaring design of the author has been to educate his audience, to boost a thesis, or to discuss some question of the hour, and by this flagrant means to 'elevate the drama'?

The first and chief aim of any play — be it revue, pantomime, musical comedy, drama, comedy, or tragedy — should be to interest or amuse. The man who says, 'When I go to a theatre I want to be amused,' is my sworn brother. Any play that does amuse the crowd so far justifies itself. There are many different levels upon which plays of different classes can interest or amuse playgoers of different tastes, or in different moods. Nor will I be so churlish as to forbid any theatregoer to plume and exhilarate himself upon his intellectual superiority to the ordinary run of theatregoers by going to plays that discuss social problems and pretend to solve them.

Some time ago I went to a play that had been recommended to me as a masterpiece, because, while carefully despising a plot, avoiding action, and defying all principles of dramatic con-

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struction, it had the sovereign merit of expounding a current social problem. The problem was Vaccination, and I must own that, after three long acts of argument, the author convinced us of our stupendous national folly in continuing the practice, and of the criminal ignorance of the whole medical profession regarding its effects. On leaving the theatre I overheard the following conversation between two lady enthusiasts: 'Was n't it lovely? Did n't you enjoy it?' said one of them. 'Oh yes, I enjoyed it thoroughly,' replied the other, 'but don't you think it was rather dull?'

The first objection to treating social and political problems on the stage is that it cannot solve them. Any and every solution that the author propounds is but a pretense, easily exposed. Let a doctrinaire dramatist resolve to treat some burning question — say, the relations of Capital and Labor. Already he holds ardent opinions upon the subject, and according to his bias he will frame his story — if he has one — to prove either that Labor is mercilessly oppressed or that Capital is unjustly misunderstood. It matters not which side he takes, because he has started out to prove his opinions rather than to portray character by means of telling an interesting story.

But immediately we round upon him: 'Of course, my dear man, you have proved your case, because you created your own world; you peopled it with your own men and women, and you made them talk and act exactly as you pleased in order to establish your opinions. But an equally competent playwright who holds opposite views to your own can quite as easily write a play to establish his contrary opinions. Away, thou insidious propagandist, disguising thyself as a dramatist! Betake thee to the platform, or the pulpit, or the pamphlet!'

On the other hand, we will suppose that the doctrinaire dramatist resolves to remain virtuously detached from personal bias. Like a donkey between two equal burdens, he holds the scales quite evenly in discussing his problem, allows both sides to have an equal say, and seeing that opinions are equally divided he sums up quite fairly in favor of neither side. Instantly we smite him on the other hip with, 'What! You elected to treat this perplexing question, and you have left it just where it was! You have n't even attempted to solve it.' The doctrinaire dramatist is always on one or the other horn of this dilemma.

The second objection to plays that treat of present-day social problems is that they so quickly grow old-fashioned. They are chiefly concerned, not with things that are enduring, — the permanent passions, follies, and vices common to human nature at all times, — but with rebellious controversies, and raging topics of the day. Therefore they soon become futile and effete.

Just before the war our intellectual dramatic coteries and societies were busily engaged in elevating the drama by means of plays that vociferously advocated woman suffrage. In less than five years they were as dead as mutton. More than three hundred years ago Shakespeare wrote *Macbeth*, which, underneath a breathless story of large concerted action, treated of the permanent human passion of ambition. *Macbeth* has therefore been continuously played throughout the civilized world for all the intervening generations. It deals greatly with great things, with primary perennial universal emotions. Therefore it endures through the centuries. It has recently been successfully produced in Japan.

I do not say that a doctrinaire dramatist may not sometimes illuminate his theme and stir his audience to fruitful thought about it; or that he

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may not exhibit true and living portraits of character that illustrate his transitory message. Mr. Galsworthy's interesting, sincere, and deeply moving play, *Strife*, is an admirable example of this class. It keeps the attention of the audience; it evenly holds the scales, and vividly shows the folly and futility of strikes, and the misery they cause. Unfortunately it has had so little effect that since its production strikes have enormously increased.

I do not seek to exclude the doctrinaire play from the stage, or indeed to exclude any kind of play that interests or amuses any kind of audience. I have always fought for the utmost freedom for the dramatist to treat all subjects in his own way. But I do mildly protest against the prevalent notion that merely because a play exploits some crying question of the hour, or sets out to reform some social abuse, or grievously educates the good, patient public, or doses them with 'ideas' — I do mildly protest against the prevalent notion that such plays, merely by virtue of these aims and assumptions, belong to an altogether superior form of drama, which crowns its authors and producers with a halo of intellectual renown, and also confers a like intellectual distinction upon those advanced playgoers who have schooled themselves to endure them.

Charles Dickens, in writing *Oliver Twist*, showed very plainly that it is wrong to illtreat workhouse children. But that which gives imperishable value and interest to *Oliver Twist* is the deathless portraits of Bumble, and Fagin, Nancy, Bill Sikes, and the rest. Shelley, with equal zeal for social reform, wrote excellent poetry to correct mankind of its inhuman habit of eating lamb chops. But that which endures in *Queen Mab* is not Shelley's vegetarianism, but his poetry. Men still continue to eat lamb chops, thus causing great perplexity to our Dominion Premiers in the matter of meat importation.

If I may adopt a missionary twang myself, I would counsel our rising young dramatists: 'O my dear young brethren, as one who has often been sorely tempted to reform the British drama by the easy and sinful means of propagandist plays, let me earnestly implore you to save the souls of your dramatic reputations. Forsake the evil path of educating playgoers by offering them social problems, which, as I have shown, you cannot prove. And, O my dear young friends, let me implore you to beware of having "ideas." For in ten years' time the great public, and also the superior order of intellectual playgoers who form your clientele, will have stuffed their heads with a brand new set of "ideas" and problems and fads, and you will then be as voices crying in the wilderness, whom no man regardeth. Lastly, I exhort you to write upon the tablets of your hearts Aristotle's two main rules of play-craftsmanship, verified and confirmed for over two thousand years: "The plot is the first thing. The end — that is, a definite inevitable conclusion to which all the articulated action directs — the end is the chief thing." I will never cease to pray for you, that you may be kept on the plain, straight road.'

Is, then, the drama forbidden to teach? Do *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* teach us nothing? Yes, the drama should teach, indeed it cannot avoid teaching — either good or evil. But the drama should teach, not openly and directly by preachments and proclamations and propaganda, but as nature teaches — silently, indirectly, implicitly; by action, not by words; with potent but unseen influence and occult, far-removed results. The drama should slyly, obliquely insinuate lessons in the science which most of all we are concerned to learn — the science of wise living.

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OSCAR WILDE AS A LETTER-WRITER

BY BERNARD LINTOT

[*'Bernard Lintot' is a pseudonym veiling the yet unguessed identity of the writer of a series of 'End Papers,' which regularly round off the charming little literary monthly — late a quarterly — known as* To-Day. *Not long ago a series of these essays was gathered up into a volume called simply* End Papers. *The present paper is based on two new collections of Wilde's letters, which have just appeared in London under the titles* After Reading *and* After Berneval.]

From *To-Day, November*
(London Literary Monthly)

One of these days the letters of Oscar Wilde will be gathered together in a volume, and when that day comes there is little doubt that a collection of epistles of great charm and unique distinction will be added to the literature of its kind. In the meantime these familiar epistles are scattered widely over the earth in the hands of collectors of autographs and 'association copies' of his works; all except two little bouquets which Mr. Beaumont has issued in the opulent format of his press. Though published separately, the two groups of letters are really one, marking the early and happy, though still tragic, days of the poet's release from Reading Gaol and his brief and hopeful stay at the little seaside resort of Berneval, near Dieppe, which preface the last phase, and finally the dejected flight from Berneval to Naples and back again to Paris. The period covered is just one year, from May 1897 to May 1898; but in that year we are shown a course of hope and anguish which might well have filled a lifetime, which in fact is a life — a new life — made and broken.

Oscar Wilde was released from Reading Gaol on May 19, 1897, after completing a sentence of two years' imprisonment. He crossed over to Dieppe on the same day with a friend, and was met by Robert Ross, to whom he handed the manuscript of the greatest of all his letters, now known as *De Profundis*. After a brief stay at Dieppe he settled, under the name of Sebastian Melmoth, at the little Hôtel de la Plage, Berneval-sur-Mer, some six miles along the coast, just north of Puys. A few days later he rented the Chalet Bourgeat, where he wrote *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. Here he lived, at first happily, then in growing boredom, until the following September, when he left the place forever. Old and new friends visited him, and he carried on a considerable correspondence with Robert Ross and others. Now and then the old humor and the old 'brilliance' play over the pages, but in the main those published are business letters or the complaints of a tortured and restless soul.

In the first of them, written on May 28, — 'my first day alone, and of course a very unhappy one,' — he refers to mysterious warnings of dangerous friends in Paris, and comments in the true style of his brilliant past: 'I hate mystery: it is so obvious.' Three days later he writes: 'Nowadays everybody is jealous of everyone else except, of course, husband and wife.' Adding, in character, 'I think I shall keep this last remark of mine for my play.' And

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further on and more happily: 'I am going to write a Political Economy in my heavier moments. The first law I lay down is: "Wherever there exists a demand there is no supply." This is the only law that explains the extraordinary contrast between the soul of man and man's surroundings. Civilizations continue because people hate them. A modern city is the exact opposite of what everyone wants. Nineteenth-century dress is the result of our horror of the style. The tall hat will exist as long as people dislike it.'

There are other good things in this long and excellent letter, including a humorous piece of irony which I cannot help sharing with my readers: 'I breakfast to-morrow with the Stannards: what a great, passionate, splendid writer John Strange Winter is! How little people understand her work! *Bootle's Baby* is *une œuvre symboliste* — it is really only the style and the subject that are wrong. Pray never speak lightly of *Bootle's Baby* — indeed, pray never speak of it at all. I never do.' And what could be more amusing than his reference, on July 6, to the local enthusiasm for the Diamond Jubilee? 'To-day is stormy and wet. But my chalet is delightful, and when I pass through Berneval-le-Grand they still cry, "*Vivent Monsieur Melmoth et la Reine d'Angleterre!*" It is an astonishing position.'

Early in the series there are intimations of troubles and sorrows ahead. He is never certain of himself. He knows his 'Neronian hours — rich, profligate, cynical, materialistic' — are over, but he scents revivals if opportunity or chance offer: 'If I live in Egypt, I know what my life would be. If I live in the South of Italy, I know I should be idle, and worse. I want to live here.' 'Here' is Berneval where he had found sanctuary, and also the little church of Notre Dame de Liesse — which latter he looks upon as a miracle. He always wanted to go on a pilgrimage, and now he can: to Our Lady of Joy, which is only fifty yards from the hotel! 'It has probably been waiting for me all these purple years of pleasure, and now it comes to meet me with Liesse as its message.' That was on May 31; on September 4 he is off to Rouen — 'I simply cannot stand Berneval — I nearly committed suicide there last Thursday, I was so bored.'

Less than three weeks later he was in Naples. In his first letter from the south he announces that the *Ballad of Reading Gaol* is finished and on its way to Leonard Smithers, who published it. 'I want peace,' he says, 'that is all. Perhaps I shall find it.' He was looking for it in the wrong place — outside himself. There is a brief echo of the old wit apropos of the *Ballad:* 'I think bits of the poem very good now — but I will never again out-Kipling Henley.' Which is, of course, unfair to his own work. He promises to begin the *Florentine Tragedy* to-morrow. 'After that I must tackle *Pharaoh.*' Financial troubles thicken. 'Unless Pinker [his agent] gets me £300 [for the *Ballad*] I shall not be able to get food.'

There is much correspondence about the publication, and Smithers annoys him by suggesting an edition of six hundred copies at 2*s.* 6*d.* Wilde knows — and we know he was right — that more will sell: 'Smithers knows all about bad wine and bad women, but on books he is sadly to seek.' His discussions with Ross about the structure of the poem show an unimpaired critical faculty. In fact the letters in *After Berneval* form an admirable commentary on the poem. His sorrow was growing, and before he left Naples he began to doubt Robert Ross: 'I do think you make wonderfully little allowance for a man like myself — now ruined, broken-hearted, and thoroughly

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unhappy. You stab me with a thousand phrases: if one phrase of mine shrills through the air near you, you cry out that you are wounded to death.'

At the opening of the New Year, 1898, he was at Hôtel de Nice, Rue des Beaux Arts, Paris, still concerned over the publication of the *Ballad.* Smithers only printed four hundred of the first edition after all — 'I fear he has missed a popular "rush." He is so fond of "suppressed" books that he suppresses his own.' He is also interested in prison-reform, and wants copies sent to Michael Davitt and John Burns. Henry Davray translates the *Ballad* into French. 'It is a very difficult thing to translate — as, unfortunately and oddly, Davray has never been in prison, so knows nothing of prison terms.'

He has now taken up his abode at the Hôtel d'Alsace, which was to prove his last home. He reads keenly and comments vivaciously on the press notices of the *Ballad:* 'Henley's hysterical personalities have done no harm' — on the contrary, without them his beatification as a saint would have been impossible. 'I shall now live as the infamous Saint Oscar of Oxford, Poet and Martyr.' His wife's death in April gave him 'great grief,' but he is soon cheerful again with friends, Henry Harland among them, and 'Whistler and I met face to face the other night as I was entering Pousset's to dine with the Thaulows. How old and weird he looks — like Meg Merrilies!' Some old-time friends avoid him, one 'with the artificial modesty of the debtor' — a masterly stroke of irony. He likes Rodin's *Balzac,* which is then creating a sensation: 'Superb — just what a *romancier* is, or should be — the leonine head of a fallen angel, with a dressing-gown.'

There is no sign of the decadence which we know from other sources was proceeding. His chief worry would seem to be money; on one occasion he was penniless for two days. 'It was really like journeying through Hell. I was in the "Circle of the Boulevards" — one of the worst in the Inferno.' The series closes with a note on financial matters sent in May 1898. He says it is difficult 'to recapture the artistic mood of detachment from the accidents of life,' and that although he can, and does some work, he cannot bear to be alone. There is significance in that confession, and indeed in the whole of these letters, which throw much light on a complex and bizarre personality, and not always unfavorably. If these letters mean anything they mean that Oscar Wilde was a weak rather than a vicious man.

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ALAS, POOR GHOST!

BY PIERRE MILLE

[*M. Mille once concluded a list of his writings with the words: 'Hundreds of tales which I, being the most negligent of men, have never collected into a volume.' Of these merry little stories, scattered here and there in odd corners of the French press, this is one. The author is especially interesting because he was one of Kipling's first sponsors in France.*]

From *Le Temps, November* 20
(Semiofficial Opportunist Daily)

As everybody knows in my part of the city, — and, if I may be permitted to say so, everybody in Paris, — my highly respectable neighbor, Madame Louise, is a medium, and a medium endowed with extraordinary powers.

You have to go up four stories in an old house in the Rue Boutarel. Her apartment consists of only two rooms plus a kitchen, but they are extraordinarily large, for the building dates back to a century when architects were not stingy with space. In the back room of Madame Louise Emilie — a widow of irreproachable conduct and almost canonical age — there is a mahogany bed covered with a red eider-down quilt and a blue lace spread, a Voltaire armchair of rosewood, and a dressing-table of iron with imitation willow legs. On the mantelpiece there is a big alarm clock framed between two candelabra — of imitation bronze, it is true, but with an infinite number of branches; and on the commode — of mahogany like her bed — a wreath of orange blossoms under a glass globe, which proves, or at least assumes to prove, that the good lady brought her husband — who during his lifetime was a customs officer — a virtue beyond reproach.

I know all this because I am a steady attendant at her spiritualistic séances, and this is the room where I leave my overcoat. The séances themselves take place in the dining-room, which might, with a little squeezing in, hold about twenty people, a dozen sitting around the table and making the chain which the spirits require, and the rest bolt upright against the wall. As I said before, Madame Louise is a remarkable medium and a highly respectable person of the greatest altruism. Nevertheless, as even the priest must live by the altar, — and who can question that? — it is quite the proper thing to leave something on a plate which stands for the purpose on a little table. Before the war it was two francs, but nowadays nobody can decently leave less than a five-franc note.

Madame Louise gives private sittings every day, but her regular séances take place only once a week, on Saturday evenings. The 'manifestations' rarely fail, but they are of unequal value, which — or so the faithful say — is indisputable proof of their authenticity. Most of the time the spirits consent to communicate only by raps on the table. They devote a good deal of their attention on such occasions to the high cost of living, and announce that it is going to be worse — which, to my way of thinking, shows their good sense. They also predict that a certain politician very much in the public eye

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is going crazy and that 'there will be another war.'

Of course the defunct relatives of Madame Louise's clients also appear very often. They are what people want and they naturally have to be asked for. They usually say that they are perfectly satisfied with their supraterrestrial lot and advise their families in their business affairs. When a marriage is in prospect, their opinion is usually unfavorable. On the other hand, at private sittings, Madame Louise's familiar spirit, who is called Leonard, — I do not know why, — is usually indulgent to the difficulties of the ladies. He tells them: 'You will have unhappiness, but you 'll have happiness too.'

He is a reactionary spirit, is Leonard. He prophesies the return of the King — one more proof, I am assured, that these communications really do come from a higher plane and not from the imagination of Madame Louise, who vows that she is a good Christian but a Republican all the same. There are, however, occasions at rare intervals when Leonard scorns the mediation of the table and manifests himself by the mouth of Madame Louise, who goes into a trance; and his voice is not Madame Louise's voice — it is the voice of a man, unquestionably the voice of a man. Leonard asserts that he is a naval officer who died in 1884 when his ship was wrecked. The days when he speaks out like this are great occasions. You wait for them with impatience, and you talk about them for a long time afterward.

Last Saturday something unexpected occurred. Madame Louise seemed in the best of form, and her trance was especially profound. (I have always observed, by the way, that the medium seems to do better work if she takes two or three glasses of anisette before the sitting.) Her chest heaved with several groans that were scarcely human, and her body stiffened, but it was not the voice of Leonard that we heard. It was another voice, equally masculine but with a marked foreign accent. In fact, it was quite evidently German. Now Leonard, although he was shipwrecked, is usually an optimist. The newcomer was nothing of the sort. His very first words were: 'Ach, how unhabby I am! How unhabby!'

(I shan't try to set down in letters the German pronunciation of his words.) Very much surprised, I asked the spirit what his name was and where he was born. He replied with a note of pride, in spite of the black burden of care that weighed him down: 'Hans Gensfleisch of Strassburg or Mainz, whichever you prefer.'

I repeated in a doubtful tone: 'Hans Gensfleisch? Who were you when you were in the flesh, dear spirit?'

(It is always best to call them 'dear spirit.' They like it.)

'A printer,' said he, prouder than ever.

A printer! Like the rest of those present I was sorry Leonard had not come. A printer is a good deal less distinguished, even as a spirit, than a naval officer.

'It is not because they put up a statue to me in Paris,' he said bitterly. 'My trouble goes deeper than that. The trouble is they do not even recognize me.'

'Your statue? Where?'

'At the Imprimerie Nationale, right in the middle of the square. A statue by David.'

'But is n't that the statue of — of — of — what's his name?'

'Hans Gensfleisch.'

'I don't know him! It's the statue of Gutenberg!'

'All the same thing. My real name is Gensfleisch. Gutenberg is just a nickname that I adopted. In the spirit world they give you back your real

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name, the name you were baptized with. It's the least they can do.'

Well, of course, if it was Gutenberg, the situation was different. Things were getting interesting, but all the more so because you would have expected Gutenberg to be pretty well satisfied with his post-mortem career. Gutenberg, the conqueror of cathedrals, according to *père* Hugo, because the book ended the art of real creation in stone! Gutenberg! The creator of modern civilization, for what scientific or industrial progress would have been possible without the diffusion through printing of scientific and industrial methods! Gutenberg! The father of the press, the father of journalism, the father of all we have read or reread about his discovery, the true as well as the commonplace! And yet here was the spirit of Gutenberg continuing to groan: 'Ah, how miserable, mein Gott, how unhappy I am!'

You will observe that all the rest let me carry on the conversation, because they had the idea that, as a literary man, a conversation with the inventor of type was distinctly in my line. So I asked: 'Unhappy — why?'

'Well, you see, they're going to take me into court and put me on trial.'

'On trial? How is that?'

'Yes, the Court of Morality of Disincarnate Spirits.'

'But I can't understand.'

'That's because you don't understand our customs. As a matter of fact, it seems to me that the spirit communications you have been receiving from day to day from the other world have been deplorably reticent on that point. You must know that the spirits set up a court to judge the acts of the disincarnate spirits, not as they appeared at the moment of their death, but in their *ultimate results*. That's why Cain was restored to good society during the nineteenth century, because if he had not killed Abel he would not have been banished by his father, and in that event his son Tubal would not have thought out the employment of metals which has developed so highly in our own days.'

'But what about you yourself, then? It seems to me —'

'Yes, yes, up to the present everything has gone very well; but to-day I am accused of crime and the encouragement of crime — I, Gutenberg!'

'Is it really so?'

'It really is. The Court of Morality of Disincarnate Spirits holds me responsible for the distribution of bad money all over the earth, and also the exaggeration of the value of notes, which, they say, is one kind of forgery.'

'What are they going to do?'

'Well, it's all the doing of the Finance Ministry of Disincarnate Spirits. For, they say, if I had not invented printing you would not see a million marks worth about a centime, and another piece of paper, with the words "One Dollar" written on it, — that is to say, really about five francs, — being exchanged for eighteen francs. And so, they say, I am the worst counterfeiter in the world, — or at least, which is the same thing, in the eyes of the disincarnate spirits, — the original promoter of the biggest frauds that have ever been seen.'

'Have you had your trial yet?'

'No, but it is a pretty difficult proposition to defend myself. I shall be found guilty — no doubt of it.'

'And what will the sentence be?'

'Terrible, terrible. I am going to be condemned to a new incarnation as a Minister of Finance!'

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A SUBURBAN FAIRY TALE

BY KATHERINE MANSFIELD

[*This posthumous story appears in a magazine edited by John Middleton Murry, the distinguished English critic who was Katherine Mansfield's husband.*]

From the *Adelphi, December*
(London Literary Monthly)

Mr. and Mrs. B. sat at breakfast in the cosy red dining-room of their 'snug little crib just under half an hour's run from the City.'

There was a good fire in the grate, — for the dining-room was the living-room as well, — the two windows overlooking the cold empty garden patch were closed, and the air smelled agreeably of bacon and eggs, toast and coffee. Now that this rationing business was really over, Mr. B. made a point of a thoroughly good tuck-in before facing the very real perils of the day. He did n't mind who knew it, — he was a true Englishman about his breakfast, — he had to have it; he 'd cave in without it, and if you told him that these Continental chaps could get through half the morning's work he did on a roll and a cup of coffee — you simply did n't know what you were talking about.

Mr. B. was a stout youngish man who — had n't been able — worse luck — to chuck his job and join the Army; he 'd tried for four years to get another chap to take his place but it was no go. He sat at the head of the table reading the *Daily Mail*. Mrs. B. was a youngish plump little body, rather like a pigeon. She sat opposite, preening herself behind the coffee set and keeping an eye of warning love on Little B., who perched between them, swathed in a napkin and tapping the top of a soft-boiled egg.

Alas! Little B. was not at all the child that such parents had every right to expect. He was no fat little trot, no dumpling, no firm little pudding. He was undersized for his age, with legs like macaroni, tiny claws, soft, soft hair that felt like mouse fur, and big wide-open eyes. For some strange reason everything in life seemed the wrong size for Little B. — too big and too violent. Everything knocked him over, took the wind out of his feeble sails, and left him gasping and frightened. Mr. and Mrs. B. were quite powerless to prevent this; they could only pick him up after the mischief was done — and try to set him going again. And Mrs. B. loved him as only weak children are loved; and when Mr. B. thought what a marvelous little chap he was too — thought of the spunk of the little man — he — well he — by George — he —

'Why are n't there two kinds of eggs?' said Little B. 'Why are n't there little eggs for children and big eggs like what this one is for grownups?'

'Scotch hares,' said Mr. B. 'Fine Scotch hares for *5s. 3d.* How about getting one, old girl?'

'It would be a nice change, would n't it?' said Mrs. B. 'Jugged.'

And they looked across at each other and there floated between them the Scotch hare in its rich gravy with stuffing balls and a white pot of red-currant jelly accompanying it.

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'We might have had it for the week-end,' said Mrs. B. 'But the butcher has promised me a nice little sirloin and it seems a pity —' Yes, it did and yet — Dear me, it was very difficult to decide. The hare would have been such a change — on the other hand, could you beat a really nice little sirloin?

'There 's hare soup too,' said Mr. B., drumming his fingers on the table. 'Best soup in the world!'

'O-oh!' cried Little B. so suddenly and sharply that it gave them quite a start. 'Look at the whole lot of sparrows flown on to our lawn!' He waved his spoon. 'Look at them!' he cried. 'Look!' And while he spoke, even though the windows were closed, they heard a loud shrill cheeping and chirping from the garden.

'Get on with your breakfast like a good boy, do,' said his mother, and his father said, 'You stick to the egg, old man, and look sharp about it.'

'But look at them — look at them all hopping,' he cried. 'They don't keep still not for a minute. Do you think they 're hungry, father?'

'*Cheek-a-cheep-cheep-cheek!*' cried the sparrows.

'Best postpone it perhaps till next week,' said Mr. B., 'and trust to luck they 're still to be had then.'

'Yes, perhaps that would be wiser,' said Mrs. B.

Mr. B. picked another plum out of his paper.

'Have you bought any of those controlled dates yet?'

'I managed to get two pounds yesterday,' said Mrs. B.

'Well a date pudding 's a good thing,' said Mr. B. And they looked across at each other and there floated between them a dark round pudding covered with creamy sauce. 'It would be a nice change, would n't it?' said Mrs. B.

Outside on the gray frozen grass the funny eager sparrows hopped and fluttered. They were never for a moment still. They cried, flapped their ungainly wings. Little B., his egg finished, got down, took his bread and marmalade to eat at the window.

'Do let us give them some crumbs,' he said. 'Do open the window, father, and throw them something. Father, *please!*'

'Oh, don't nag, child,' said Mrs. B., and his father said, 'Can't go opening windows, old man. You 'd get your head bitten off.'

'But they 're hungry,' cried Little B., and the sparrows' little voices were like ringing of little knives being sharpened. '*Cheek-a-cheep-cheep-cheek!*' they cried.

Little B. dropped his bread and marmalade inside the china flowerpot in front of the window. He slipped behind the thick curtains to see better, and Mr. and Mrs. B. went on reading about what you could get now without coupons — no more ration books after May — a glut of cheese — a glut of it — whole cheeses revolved in the air between them like celestial bodies.

Suddenly, as Little B. watched the sparrows on the gray frozen grass, they grew, they changed, still flapping and squeaking. They turned into tiny little boys, in brown coats, dancing, jigging outside, up and down outside the window, squeaking, 'Want something to eat, want something to eat!'

Little B. held with both hands to the curtain. 'Father,' he whispered. 'Father! They 're not sparrows. They 're little boys. Listen, father!' But Mr. and Mrs. B. would not hear. He tried again. 'Mother,' he whispered. 'Look at the little boys. They 're not sparrows, mother!' But nobody noticed his nonsense.

'All this talk about famine,' cried Mr. B., 'all a fake, all a blind.'

With white shining faces, their arms flapping in the big coats, the little boys

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danced. 'Want something to eat — want something to eat.'

'Father,' muttered Little B. 'Listen, father! Mother, listen, please!'

'Really!' said Mrs. B. 'The noise those birds are making! I 've never heard such a thing.'

'Fetch me my shoes, old man,' said Mr. B.

'*Cheek-a-cheep-cheep-cheek!*' said the sparrows.

Now where had that child got to? 'Come and finish your nice cocoa, my pet,' said Mrs. B.

Mr. B. lifted the heavy cloth and whispered, 'Come on, Rover,' but no little dog was there.

'He 's behind the curtain,' said Mrs. B.

'He never went out of the room,' said Mr. B.

Mrs. B. went over to the window, and Mr. B. followed. And they looked out. There on the gray frozen grass, with a white, white face, the little boy's thin arms flapping like wings, in front of them all, the smallest, tiniest was Little B. Mr. and Mrs. B. heard his voice above all the voices, 'Want something to eat, want something to eat.'

Somehow, somehow, they opened the window. 'You shall! All of you. Come in *at once*. Old man! Little man!'

But it was too late. The little boys were changed into sparrows again and away they flew — out of sight — out of call.

THE PARK

BY B. D. CONLAN

[*Irish Statesman*]

A RARE wind, a fresh wind, a song and a movement,
An echo of lutes and of voices from far,
The faint stir of distant waters and the laughter that each moment
Rings careless and clear like the note of a star.

A vision of vistas, the song of a fountain,
The sound of a rare wind that hardly is heard
In its ever-flowing motion, like the stream of some far mountain,
Or voice of the evening in that of a bird.

It is here and there like the light moth that flutters,
When lanterns are lit and the curved moon grows keen;
'T is a music made of echoes which the Evening Spirit utters
When Night through a mirror of silence is seen.

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A PAGE OF VERSE

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

BY WILFRID THORLEY

[*Chambers's Journal*]

THE house where no one dares to live
Looks out upon the moor,
As though it sought the fugitive
That wronged it once before.

The gate-post where he joked and snuffed,
A smile upon his face,
Is rotting with a dank green tuft
Of lichen at the base.

The door that closed behind his back
When he his host had slain,
Shows fungi in a gaping crack
That's like a crimson stain;

As crimson as the wine he sipped
Before his host he slew,
As crimson as the blood that dripped
Down like a dreadful dew.

And when a red sun ends the light,
It makes each windowpane
A bloodshot eye upon the flight
Of him that fled the slain.

And all the garden statues glow
Like spectres of old wrath
That wait for him who long ago
Fled down that garden path.

THE SONG

BY LADY MARGARET SACKVILLE

[*T. P.'s and Cassell's Weekly*]

SHALL you return again?
Yes, sometime,
In hawthorn, summer rain,
Or a new rhyme;
Roofs green with weather-stain,
And bells a-chime;
A latticed windowpane,
Where roses climb.
How shall we know it's you?
By this and this:
White sand, the gentian's blue,
A scent, a kiss.
One ever born anew,
How may you miss,
Who lives the whole year through
In all that is!

FLAME-WILLOWS

BY GEOFFREY SCOTT

[*A Box of Paints*]

WALKING in winter woods I came
To a vague pool with willows aflame,
Overset by a wizard roof
Of taller trees in faëry woof;
As though by will
They stood there, secret, white, and still.

I praised the oak and alder's crown
With rimy chaplets ghostly spun,
Wherein the sunclouds, blue with cold,
Lit sapphire tapers, lamps of gold:
Lovely the rest,
But an old, lichened beech-tree best.

The blotted tree spoke where it stood:
'I am the leper of the wood';
Creaked the rest, 'Our fingers dry
Tap blindly on the niggard sky';
And 'Man's a fool,'
Muttered numb willows to the pool.

WHAT LOVE IS

BY GEOFFREY SCOTT

[*A Box of Paints*]

A STAR-DEEP water folded bare,
An aspen thin in ghostly air,
A sign, a memory, a bird flown,
A wild bird's claw-prick in the moon,
The woodman's dream of fallen snow
And the wind fallen: love is so.

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'THE OLD FARM'

A MINISTERIAL decision to confer the *Mérite Agricole* on French families that have tilled the same land for three centuries reveals the surprising fact that there are seven hundred and fifty such families in France. Some of them have worked the same farm so long that the three hundred years necessary to receive the award seem almost insignificant. The Lafargue family at Coutie, in the Département of Tarn-et-Garonne, has held the same land since the reign of Charlemagne, and indeed members of the family were tilling it some years before the great Emperor received his papal coronation. The Beyer family has worked its farm for a thousand years at Colombis near Gap, and the Lampegnat family has worked the same farm at Besdarres in the Basses-Pyrénées for nine hundred years.

In this same Département another family has had the same farm since 1093, and at Beuvry in the Pas-de-Calais the Duquesnes family has worked the same land since 1160. Families who have run their farms since the twelfth century are really fairly common.

It is hard to imagine more striking examples of the French peasant's love for his soil, in which Zola found the theme of *La Terre* and on which M. Ernest Pérochon — the Goncourt Prize winner in 1920 — based his last novel, *La Parcelle 32*.

✻

MORE SCHOOLBOY HOWLERS

THE *Schoolmaster*, which is, as its name implies, an English journal for the edification of pedagogues, makes us all its debtors at irregular intervals by gathering up a collection of the choicest 'howlers' perpetrated in examination papers during the year by the British schoolboy. This year the British schoolgirl is also included, and some of the best — or worst, for it depends on how you look at it — howlers come from the Leeds High School for girls.

It was a pupil in this institution who declared that the Roman numerals LXX stood for 'love and kisses' — a mistake which will be perfectly comprehensible to any ex-officer who censored enlisted men's mail during the war and observed their penchant for adding osculatory x's to their signatures.

Other equally amusing blunders — if they are blunders, and not so many sly attempts to twitch teacher's ankle — are also listed. Whatever the intention, whether the Leeds schoolgirls were only having a bit of fun, or whether they really meant it, three sets of questions and answers are worth reprinting: —

What is the effect of lead on water? — It sinks.

What bird lays the biggest egg? — The biggest bird.

What discovery was due to the falling of an apple? — The wickedness of Eve.

✻

A FRENCH CRITIC ON AMERICAN SHORT STORIES

MLLE. LÉONIE BILLARD, who holds the chair of English and American literature in the University of Lyon, writes a long article in *Le Mercure de France* on the American short story. Avoiding the usual condescending tone so amusingly frequent with European critics when dealing with any of the American arts, she suggests that, in the short story at least, America has a real artistic achievement, pointing out that in

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the two series of short stories in the World Classical Series — which is issued by an English publishing house — American stories predominate. This is not the case, however, with poetry, for in a standard anthology like Palgrave's, and in an additional selection added later to bring it up to date, comparatively few poems by Americans appear. The French critic also recalls the strong American influence on the literary generation in Paris represented by Baudelaire, Gautier, and Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, all of whom felt the influence of Poe almost as markedly as his American followers.

After reviewing rather hastily the development of our fiction from Washington Irving to Sinclair Lewis, the French scholar describes the present situation of American fiction thus: —

'Under the influence of a new conception, of which Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, and Waldo Frank are the most characteristic examples, the American short story is achieving to-day a success and a profound beauty which it lost during the period when, as we have seen, everything was sacrificed to two equally undesirable objects — pleasing the public taste and being "brilliant." To-day these comparatively simple triumphs are not enough for the sincere and honest artists whose literary ambition is so high and so noble that it abandons immediate success and the plaudits of the crowd in order to seek praise of a wholly different value. Thanks to these writers, the short stories, whose form and technique have been remade, no longer have, as they had thirty years ago, the sole purpose of revealing to the American public the picturesque aspects and customs of a country which was then so new and so desirous of beholding its own visage. To-day the short story must interpret a new America with a new spirit and a new ambition.

'In the revival which is transforming all American literature, the short story expresses first of all the curiosity of the modern generation, its eager love of life and its desire to possess it fully. Moreover, the best observers and keenest interpreters of America understand to-day that their country, so brilliant in its material prosperity, must henceforth find its soul and explore the unknown region of the spiritual world.'

❦

ZOÖLOGISTS AT WAR

THE appearance of a new volume on the fauna of Iraq, under the auspices of the Natural History Society of Bombay, bears witness to a surprising accomplishment by scientific men serving with the British forces in Mesopotamia. Although none of these men appears to have been attached to the army for any but strictly military purposes, they carried on their peace-time vocations hand in hand with their military duties, to such good effect that they discovered ninety-two species which are new to science.

This is largely due to the Bombay Society, and especially to Captain N. B. Kinnear, formerly of its staff and now of the British Museum, who prepared a pamphlet showing how little was known of the fauna of the country in which the army was campaigning, and making suggestions for collection.

Some of these achievements are really remarkable. A number of specimens were caught close to the enemy lines, and a great many were taken within artillery range. Colonel Magrath actually caught and skinned a lesser shrew while he was under shell-fire in the trenches in front of Kut. An officer in charge of Regimental Scouts trained his men to look out for specimens as well as for the enemy. A colonel in the medical service collected a great many reptiles, and during the

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earlier part of the campaign one or two of the higher commanders also coöperated. The results have now been collected in a single volume under the title, *A Survey of the Fauna of Iraq.*

✠

WHY MOLIÈRE CHANGED HIS NAME

WRITING in *La Revue Mondiale*, M. Léon Bollack advances a new theory to account for Molière's abandonment of his real name, Poquelin, and his adoption of the name Molière, under which he became famous. This name, says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, was chosen 'for some undiscovered reason,' but M. Bollack contends that he has at last discovered the origin of the name, if not the reason for its adoption.

Some have imagined that the pseudonym was borrowed from an unknown author, others that Molière adopted a name already partly known for the sake of the advantages which it gave him. But, says M. Bollack, this is a psychological blunder, for 'young men dream of immortalizing their own names or, if they seek to conceal their personality, at least immortalizing whatever name, still unknown, they may have chosen for themselves.' He then reviews the various devices usually employed in making noms de plume, as for example plays on initials, abbreviations of long names, the use of first names as surnames, changes in spelling, anagrams, puns, foreign words, and mythological characters.

Molière had resort, however, to none of these. His name seems to be geographic. In M. Bollack's own words: 'Let us take up a list of the communes of France in their alphabetical order. Molière or Molières is here inscribed nine separate times. One of these is located in Algeria, which puts it out of court. Another is situated in the Drôme, where our author never was. Two are located in the Gard, where also his wanderings were hardly extensive. We may then eliminate these villages from the field. But if we look up on the map of France the locality of the other four, we are amazed to find that, as we leave Limoges and approach Périgueux, a Molière occurs near Bergerac. Now the young traveling comedian knew Cyrano. Perhaps he would think of this place, from the patronymic of that celebrated writer, and therefore, by an analogy, he might wish to become Poquelin de Molière, in imitation of Cyrano de Bergerac. Not far from here are two other Molières — one near Figeac and the other close to Pézenas. Thus, four times in his wandering career the vagabond actor, traveling from Périgord to Provence, met the same name. Perhaps, as a second hypothesis, this repetition might strike the imagination of the actor Poquelin as almost fateful.'

M. Bollack's theories are somewhat injured by the fact that Molière appears to have been on the stage in Paris under his pseudonym prior to his career as a vagabond actor, but to this objection he replies that the actor probably took a good many trips with strolling companies about which we know nothing, before he reached Paris. As for the frequency of the geographic name Molière, M. Bollack points out that it apparently is due to the fact that these localities supply a stone useful for making *pierres meulières*, and the name Molière is derived from them.

✠

PUCCINI AND HIS SCORES

REPORTS of a lawsuit between Puccini and his publishers, Messrs. Riccardi and Company of Milan, reveal the existence of an exceedingly important but quite unknown individual in the office of the publishing house. Puccini's scores are said to be triumphs of illegibility. Only one man alive can read them and he is employed to do it by

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Messrs. Riccardi. Without this man there might be no Puccini operas at all, and the spiteful legend runs in Milan that the unbroken connection that has existed between the composer and his publishers is largely due to the unique ability of the only man who can read Puccini's scores.

❋

EDUCATION AND THE NATIONS

THE *Manchester Guardian* calls attention to the possible value of the schools in the work of furthering international understanding. It is not a new idea by any means, but the writer in the *Guardian* at least succeeds in making it seem a little less a daydream than usual.

'Anyone who was given an English, an American, and a French textbook on the same subject,' says this writer, 'would recognize at once that he was dealing with three different systems.'

At the same time he would find it difficult to put into words completely the essence of the distinctions he could not fail to recognize. The books reflect the ideals which the teachers of these different nations are striving after. They are, in short, the fundamental national characteristics which it is one of the functions of education to hand on from one generation to another. It is important to note, too, that these characteristics can be, and often are, modified in that process of handing on.

The spread of a culture from one country to another is usually accomplished by means of the process of education, using the phrase in its widest sense. The present condition of public feeling in the colonies, in Egypt, and in India are well worth comparing with the kind of teaching given in the schools there. The study of a few school-books on history used in the United States will throw a flood of light on our relations with that country. The readiness with which the Belgian and the Balkan countries understand and often adopt the French point of view can be correlated with the fact that teachers and students from those areas find it easy to visit French educational institutions and can be sure of a welcome there. As a result each new generation finds itself more thoroughly and more sympathetically in mental contact with French ideals. Before the war, too, Germany had begun deliberately and successfully to 'penetrate' the Balkans in the same way.

The war gave to British education an excellent opportunity to make itself known to other people. Belgian and Serbian children were accommodated in the British schools when their countries were overrun by the Germans, and have since taken the story of what they saw and learned back to their own countries. Various teachers' organizations send their representatives to conferences in other countries, but all this is hardly enough, in the view of the *Guardian's* writer, for 'public opinion should recognize the desirability of the work; there should be public support for schemes of interchange of teachers and pupils between this and other countries, and any wealthy lover of peace could find few better ways of helping to attain his desire than by providing funds for such conferences with foreign teachers in this country. The fostering of such educational liaisons should have the active sympathy of the Government, and might well form an important part of the work of the League of Nations.'

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BOOKS ABROAD

A Box of Paints, by Geoffrey Scott. With drawings by Albert Rutherston. London: at the Office of the *Bookman's Journal*, 1923. 8*s*. 6*d*.

[Martin Armstrong in the *Spectator*]

This book is one of those rare and delightful productions in which collaboration between poet and artist results in a single work of art. Mr. Rutherston's pen and water-color illustrations by the fresh lyrical quality of their pattern and color fascinate immediately, but the full beauty of Mr. Geoffrey Scott's poems emerges only by degrees. Their delicate perfection, their quietness and ease, the absence in them of all conscious pursuit of novelty, give them, at first, for the reader of present-day verse, an air of conventionality. The tendency at the present time is to attach far too great importance to the innovator, who is not necessarily a great or even a small artist.

Such an attitude resulted, before the war, in the curious spectacle of a crowd of not unintelligent persons giving serious and patient attention to the late lamented — but still living — Marinetti and his crew: it results also in the more pardonable mistake of believing that the works of those great innovators and charming composers, Debussy and Ravel, are supreme as music. In the case of Mr. Scott, we find a genuine artist using the conventions with beauty and originality. He is a symbolist: his poems are all symbols of meanings and emotions which — as in all true symbolism — can be most completely and accurately expressed only in the poems themselves; for to attempt to analyze and explain the true symbol is to ruin its beauty and distort and diminish its truth.

[Two poems from this book appear on A Page of Verse.]

Where Traditions Linger, by Allan Fea. London: Nash and Grayson, 1923. 12*s*. 6*d*.

[*Bookman*]

For a ramble through English towns and villages and little-known rural byways one could wish for no better guide than Mr. Allan Fea. He has a neat hand at describing the places he visits but never overloads his pages with such descriptions — he is more taken with their human interest, with the history and old association that belong to them, and the legends that have become as intimately part of them as is the authentic, duly recorded life they have known. *Where Traditions Linger* takes you here and there about Middlesex, Hants, Wilts, Dorset, Berks, Oxon, and Bucks, and wherever it takes you the halls, the little houses, the countryside are filled with memories of famous people, or of people who were important in their day, and with glamorous tales

> Of old, forgotten, far-off things
> And battles long ago.

Le Missel d'Amour, by Albéric Cahuet. Paris: Fasquelle Éditeur. 1923.

[*Le Livre des Livres*]

In his captivating articles in the *Revue de France*, Fernand Vandérem has frequently asserted his preference for critic-authors and has declared that they alone seem to have been truly qualified to judge the works of other men who themselves know by control the difficulties of the craft. Albéric Cahuet, who signs an intelligent and penetrating book-review in *L'Illustration* each week, fully bears out this observation. Himself a novelist, he is an excellent critic, and though critic he is likewise a true novelist. *Le Missel d'Amour*, which has just appeared, bears witness — as Bourget declares in a remarkable preface — to the conscientious care with which the author has pondered the laws of his art.

The English Secret and Other Essays, by Basil de Selincourt. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1923.

[*Times Literary Supplement*]

'To combine poetry and politics in France,' says Mr. de Selincourt, 'is to be versatile: with us it is to be steady-going'; and again later: 'We have no fear of being thought fantastic if we take the Irish Constitution, the Washington Conference, as texts for a discourse on English poetry. Events like these are the very stuff of which our poetry is made.'

This is the confession of faith on which Mr. de Selincourt's volume of essays is a commentary. They are all reprinted from these columns, and reprints are not often combined by any clear unity of purpose. They cover a wide range of topics — the relations of poetry and music, the problems of town housing, Wordsworth, industrialism, the League of Nations — and this might suggest even greater diversity of treatment; but they are all illustrative of what the author in one of his titles calls 'Spiritual Democracy': the growth and progress of our civilization as seen from the standpoint of the artist and the man of letters.

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Many of the articles are reviews of books or pamphlets, and here again Mr. de Selincourt well deserves attention. Reviews often resemble the votes of thanks at a public meeting, in which the local magnate occupies his time with a general survey of the subject in hand and confines to a perfunctory sentence at the close his performance of the task which has given him his opportunity. Mr. de Selincourt's reviews are really critical, in the sense in which, as he says, the critic's office is 'to share pleasure': he may sometimes impugn the Nationalism of M. Herriot or smile at M. Maurras, who regards the Roman Catholic Church as the most efficient of all organizations in spite of the fact that it believes in God; yet he is far more inclined to interpret than to censure and to agree than to satirize.

Goethe, by Benedetto Croce. With an introduction by Douglas Ainslie, and a portrait. London: Methuen, 1923. *7s. 6d.*

[G. Lowes Dickinson in *The Nation and the Athenæum*]

WHAT is important to ask about this book is whether or no it gives a fresh and profound impression of Goethe's work. Fresh, at any rate, it is, and free from the tiresome hero-worship which provokes an English reader in most of the German criticism. Thus, for example, the second part of *Faust* is dismissed very lightly as an 'opera libretto.' Goethe himself might have smiled at this. But, of course, it is true that much of that great volume is frigid, as an old man's work is bound to be, and that, if one were abstracting from the poet's wisdom, one would not dwell long upon it.

Again, some of the remarks upon the first part will surprise some Goethe students. For instance, of the 'Prologue in Heaven' we are told that it is the 'jest of a great artist, but no more than a jest, quite out of harmony with the drama that follows, and which was, in the first period, planned to be serious; a scene in Paradise with the angels, God, and the Devil, where there is not even an archaic coloring, but a *dégagé* manner slightly in the style of Voltaire.' Signor Croce apparently does not feel the balance of wit and seriousness, of impudence and dignity, which has impressed other readers. But it is idle to argue about taste, not because it is not important, but because differences of taste imply other differences going down to the roots of character and experience. . . .

It seems questionable whether any of the clever young men who can see nothing in Goethe will be led to see anything in him by this book. However, it is wise to hope for the best.

Essays of a Biologist, by Julian Huxley. London: Chatto and Windus, New York: Knopf, 1923. $2.50.

[T. J. Pulvertaft in *Discovery*]

MR. JULIAN HUXLEY is not only the inheritor of a famous name; he also possesses gifts of style and skill in presentation of his arguments that were the hallmark of his famous ancestor. He has a deep interest in the borderlands of science and philosophy, biology and theology, which were always fascinating his grandfather and brought him into sharp contact with leaders of thought in his day. . . .

In his 'Essay on Progress' Mr. Huxley breaks a lance with Inge and Bury, who deny the existence of a law of progress. We think that they are not so much in disagreement as may appear. Has the mind of man in historic times increased its capacity to achieve more with the material at hand than in the past? We have seen the Golden Age of Athens and its fruits have never been surpassed, and the fact that man has capabilities greater than those beings lower in scale of evolution does not imply that man possesses the further capability of progress which would prove the contention of our author. . . .

We have already referred to the concluding papers, which are 'Rationalism and the Idea of God' and 'Religion and Science: Old Wine in New Bottles,' and we take leave of a suggestive and informing volume by quoting its closing words: 'That moulding of matter by spirit is, under one aspect, Science; under another, Art; under still another, Religion. Let us be careful not to allow the moulding forces to counteract each other when they might coöperate.' To do this it is necessary to understand the limitations of Science, Art, and Religion.

BOOKS MENTIONED

After Reading. Letters of Oscar Wilde to Robert Ross. London: Beaumont, 1923. £1 1*s.*

After Berneval. Letters of Oscar Wilde to Robert Ross. London: Beaumont, 1923. £1 1*s.*

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF BOMBAY. *A Survey of the Fauna of Iraq.* Bombay.

PÉROCHON, ERNEST. *La Parcelle 32.* Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1922. 7 fr.

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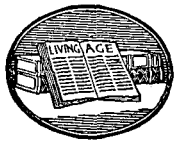

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